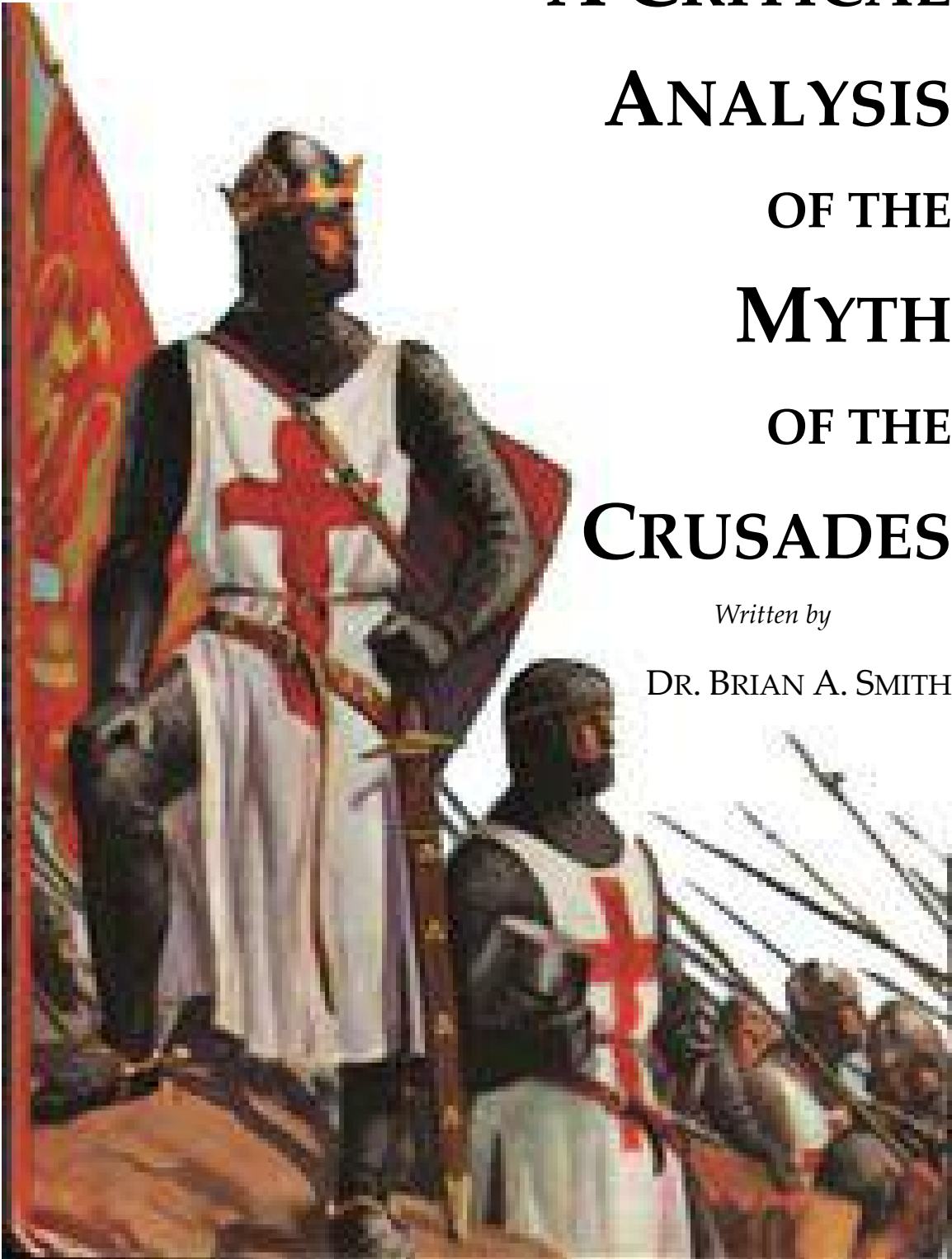


# A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MYTH OF THE CRUSADES

*Written by*

DR. BRIAN A. SMITH



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*to Randy*

*without whom this would not have been possible*

# A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MYTH OF THE CRUSADES

## INTRODUCTION

The Crusades were an exaggerated response to a call for assistance, sent from the Eastern Roman Emperor, Alexios I Comnenus, in 1095. He needed help to resist the growing threat of the Seljuk Turks that had staked claims to Anatolia. What he got was nothing like he wanted and more than he bargained for. At least, that's the short version of events.

A longer version and one that has gained a lot of followers of late, e.g. The Crusader Armies by Steve Tibble; The Collapse of the Eastern Mediterranean by Ronnie Ellenblum; and Collapse by Jared Diamond; look to the *herders versus farmers* disputes that have occurred for millennia and extrapolated this by placing climate change as the ultimate cause of the Crusades. In so doing they highlight the relatively rare instances of European Catholics fighting with Arab Muslims against the encroaching Muslim Seljuk Turks to underpin their non-religious based premise. Unfortunately the premise fails to address what benefit could King Richard I of England expect for his participation in the Third Crusade? The answer surely had nothing to do with agriculture. The inherent problem with this type of approach, besides being arbitrary, is that it fails to consider cause and effect properly. Anything could be made the cause – it was the Virgin Mary's fault. If she hadn't given birth to Jesus, the Catholic Church would never have existed and there would not have been the Crusades. Both of these are examples of *logical fallacies*.

Without the religious element, participation by the masses is difficult to explain. The target was the East, usually, but not always or exclusively. The goals however are not quite as easy to pinpoint. The different strata of society had different goals. There was never just one goal. First, there was the Pope's goal which was often clearly defined in the papal *bull* calling for a Crusade – 'capture Jerusalem' or 'recover Edessa' – while others were a bit hazy – 'recover the land for the glory of God' or 'eliminate the Saracen and unbeliever wherever they may be' (which caused, on more than one occasion, Jewish pogroms in Western Europe). Then there were the vast majority of participants and supporters who actually had religion, or rather, their blind faith in a religious leader (today this is the definition of the word *fanaticism*) as the core around which many other factors swirled. Some wanted to escape a life of grinding poverty. Knights fought for a living; they had to go where there services were required. Others were escaping from something – the wrath of a monarch, some crime committed, or a

life that was despised. Crusades provided the answer to almost any and every reason for going.

Who's left? The secular leaders of the Crusades – their goal was to make money and lots of it. This becomes apparent with the First Crusade when two of its four leaders never made it to Jerusalem. They peeled off and overthrew some local government on the way to Jerusalem and became the new leader. If they completed their vow, they did so grudgingly under threat of excommunication. Many, if not most, writers living in the West continue to alter history by cherry-picking the facts they use such as Paul Crawford who denied the financial motive of the crusaders in the face of overwhelming facts in his 2011 piece *Four Myths About the Crusaders*.<sup>1</sup> His piece is the epitome of the apologist's attempts to prevent the reader from learning the ugly truth – it was a profit-making venture built on the superstitious ignorance of the masses. He includes figures such as a 75% casualty rate that was discredited years ago; he conflates discordant groups; and he uses so many *red herrings* you could kipper yourself into a frenzy. Using discredited figure he hopes to prove the non-materialistic nature of all crusaders. Crawford admits to his disingenuous method when he states he is quoting from articles that are not *recognized in the wider scholarly world* without bothering to tell the reader why – they're not scholarly. It is through these not-so-subtle propaganda pieces that crusader myths continue to be foisted on a willfully unsuspecting public. The *Intercollegiate Review* does not claim to be scholarly or scientific journal but one that promotes *intellectual conservative thought* – the definition of *propaganda*.

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In reality, religion was *more* important to the masses than to any other audience; no one would fight a war with the slogan 'Make me rich.' Religion was, and remains, the single-most effective recruiting tool that has ever existed. The litany of wars of religion is endless. The early 20<sup>th</sup> century war for Irish independence and the subsequent wars in Northern Ireland present the opposing forces as Catholics and Protestants, not Irish and English; the 16<sup>th</sup> century war for Dutch Independence (of which my ancestor Jan Jansen van Salé is a freedom fighter and hero to the Dutch and a contemptible criminal to the Spanish) was also sold as a war against Catholics – it was a war of Dutch new money against old Spanish money; the Balkan wars from the 19<sup>th</sup> century war for Greek independence through their post-World War I Greco-Turkish Wars to the war in Kosovo in 1998 are fights over land, not religion; Syria's ongoing civil war is likewise, a war

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<sup>1</sup> Paul F. Crawford, "Four myths about the Crusades," *The Intercollegiate Review*, Spring 2011. <https://isi.org/intercollegiate-review/four-myths-about-the-crusades/>. The *Review* is published by ISI who not only shares 75% the letters from ISIS but uses much the same tactics.



based on wealth, not on religion; the 1948 Indo-Pakistani war following Britain's abandonment of its colony which led, directly, to both nations becoming members of the exclusive nuclear-armed nations group is based on territorial claims, not religion; the multiple Israeli wars and conflicts that saw it become a member of that same group (despite their disingenuous claims to the contrary), and so on, have always been a fight for land, never for religion – Israel is a nation whose entire existence is predicated upon a land grab. Yet each of these wars and conflicts are portrayed as having religion at the core – the cheerleaders sing about the 'will of God' and 'God is on our side' from the sidelines in willful ignorance of the duplicity required to do so since they know the enemy is doing the very same thing – one side has to be wrong. Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in each of their many versions, are merely three branches of one Abrahamic-based religion. Religious tenets are the foundation stones upon which the most consistent and the most effective propaganda tools ever used to recruit a large number of people to fight an enemy to 'cleanse' or 'purge' the land of the unbeliever even when both belong to one of the three Abrahamic religions. That this has been used so effectively to recruit people to kill or be killed is all the more astounding when one considers the claims made for the great education received by and the level of intelligence required of today's soldiers, yet, these same soldiers choose not to acknowledge the fact that they have been duped. The rewards won with the loss of millions of lives are not for the soldier to enjoy; they never were. And just as their parents did not benefit from this ritualized sacrifice, their children will not benefit either; the financial rewards are pre-reserved and have been for well over a millennium. So embedded are these people in their own falsified history that many are wholly ignorant of the facts but ignorance is never an acceptable excuse. The Abrahamic religions don't hold a monopoly on wars – it was Mohammed battling Shiva in the IndoPakistan wars since 1947.

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The Crusades provided the perfect answer for virtually all of the reasons people wanted to change their lives and/or use their skills; not only was there a demand for people who would kill for god but the resolution to the sticky wicket that arose was effected; the dialogue between a Priest and a congregant went something like this:

*'But isn't murder one of those prohibited things in the Ten Commandments?'*

*'Very good question. And, yes, murder is a mortal sin. But God meant murdering a human was a mortal sin. He just didn't have enough room on the stone tablet to fit that word in and, well, you know, he didn't want to start over.'*

*'Hmm? What? How do I know that's what he meant?'*

*'Good question. Because the Pope told me so and, you know, whatever he says is right; that's what we mean when we say he's infallible.'*

*'Hmm? What? What other words are missing from the tablets?'*

*'Good question. Well, that's why we have a Pope. He just knows these things like, maybe they come to him in a dream or when he needs to justify murder. The Pope has all the answers and he tells me when he's figured out what words need to be added or taken away or sometimes both. It's all covered in the chapter called 'God works in mysterious ways ... to everyone else but not me, an introduction to being the Pope.'*

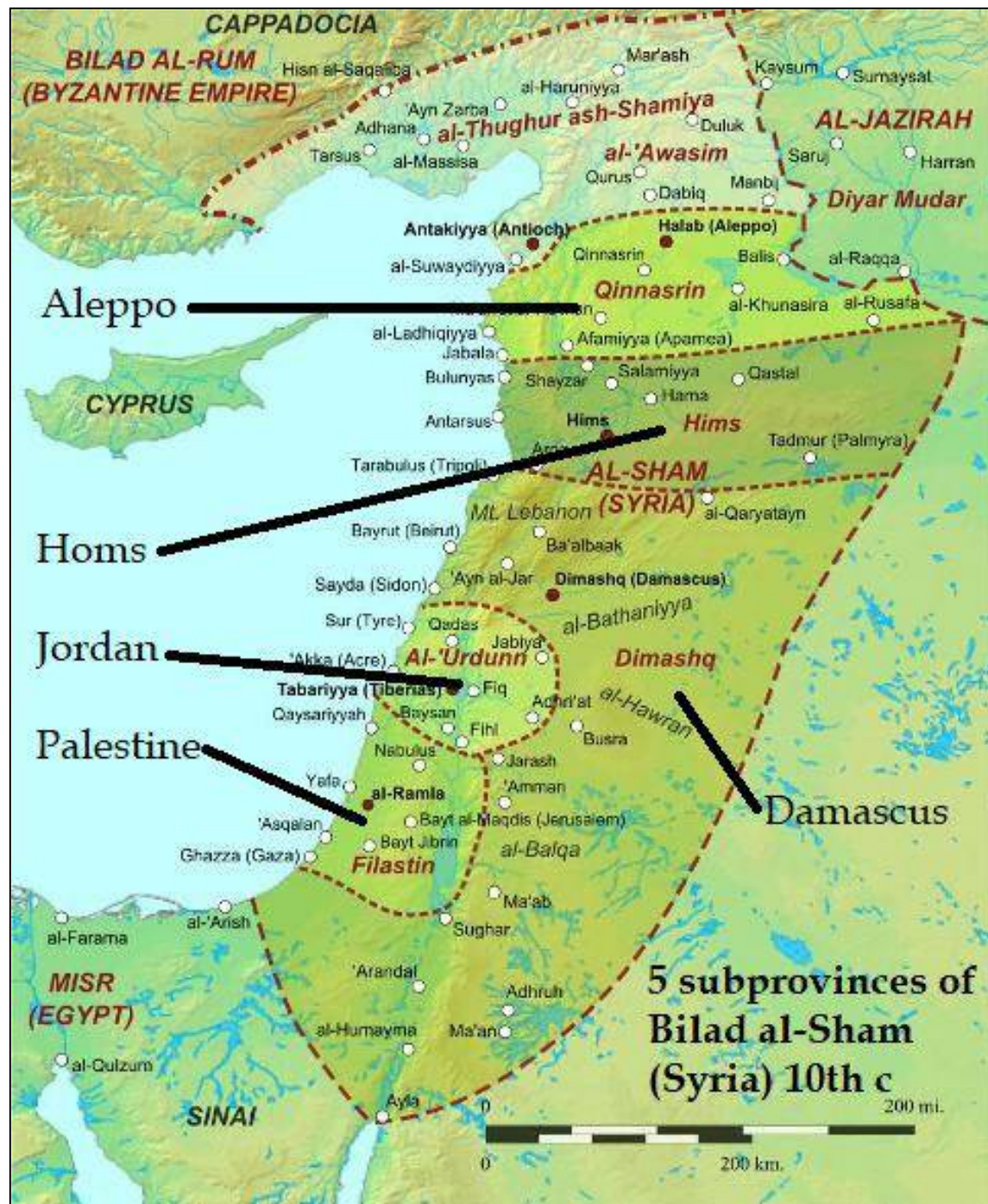
Literally – that is what the Pope said – Muslims were not human and killing one was no different than killing a hog. In fact, it was better than killing a hog (which says a lot since you get bacon from hogs). Not only did you not-murder someone, God was going to *reward* you for each one you removed from the Earth – remember, you couldn't be a murderer – that would be bad. It was the other-worldly equivalent of picking up empty soda cans and turning them in for money. You do good; you get a reward. This became a strong selling point because there were many, many people who did really, really bad things to others – rape, murder, and torture being much higher on the list then as opposed to now – rape was a way to marry, if you wanted a woman, you raped her and then the Church forced her to be your wife. If you didn't want her as a wife all you had to do was rape another woman and she was your wife and the other one was a whore doing the devil's work and she was to be shunned or stoned (and not in the medicinal marijuana way) – really – that is exactly how it was. It was better than getting a 'Get out of jail' and a 'Pass go. Collect \$200' rolled into a single card! Murder was not murder when on Crusade, it was *doing god's work* because those you killed were not people – so said the Pope. And god likes it; I know, because he told me so.

*iv*

What follows is a brief description of the nine numbered Crusades and some of the lesser-known conflicts. Many thousands died in battles or sieges and an alarming number just disappeared. A surprising number of survivors went back for more.<sup>2</sup> The names we have information are from ranks of the nobility; their names were recorded for posterity (and Wikipedia) – the commoners had no such recorder.

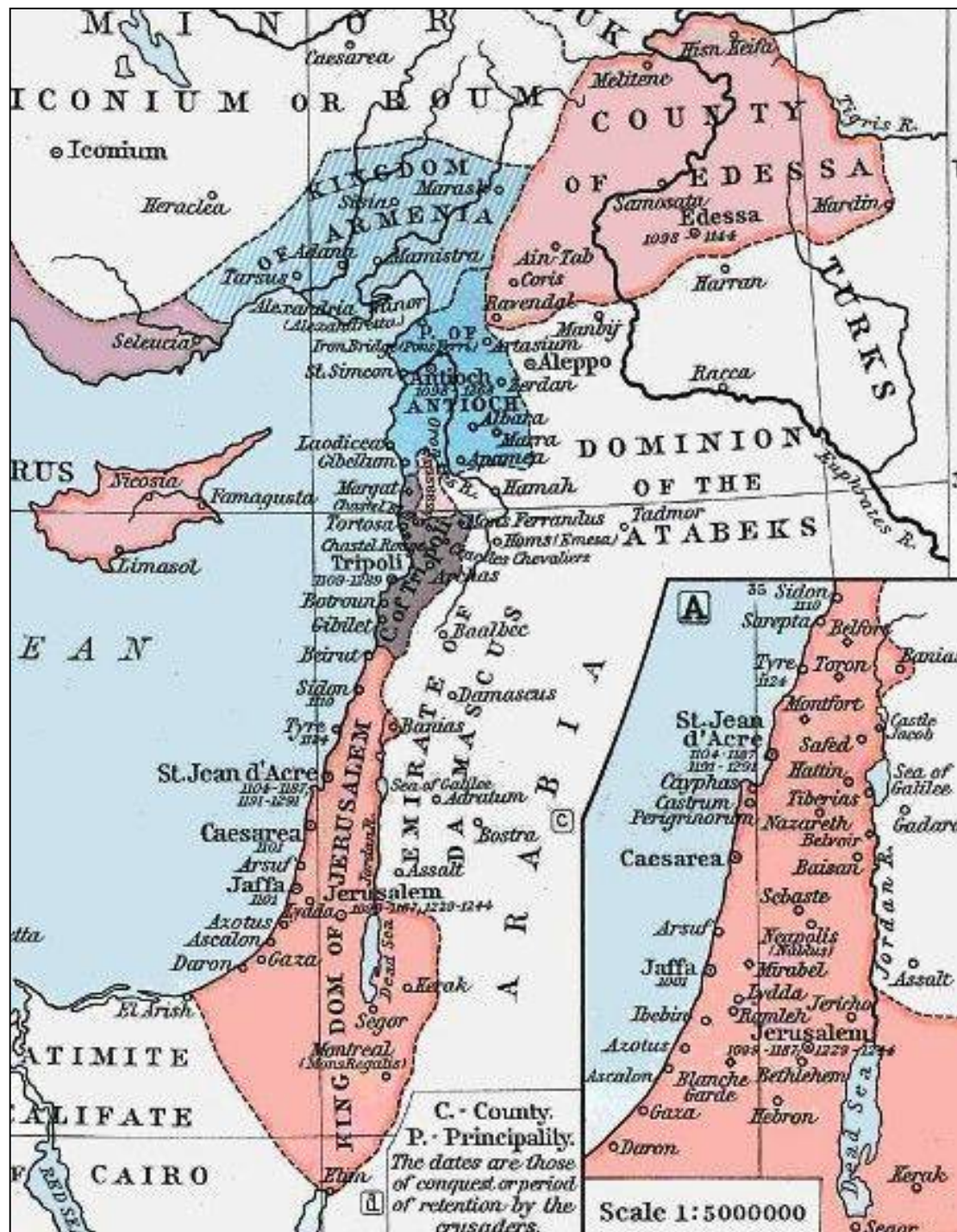
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<sup>2</sup> History Lists, List of 9 Crusades to the Holy Land, Copyright © 2012-2019 - [historylists.org](https://historylists.org)  
<https://historylists.org/events/9-crusades-into-the-holy-land.html>; and  
Database of Crusaders to the Holy Land 1095 – 1149, Digital Humanities Institute <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/crusaders/>



The *before* map is rarely shown. Taking a look at what was there shows us that this wasn't empty land – there were thriving multiethnic, multireligious, multicultural, and multinational communities living there. And they had no idea of what was about to happen to their world.





This is what the high point of the Crusades looked like. It was like this for less than a third of the 176 years the Crusader states existed; maps of how it was for the majority of time just don't look as good in textbooks. The crusades were just one part of a conflict that started centuries earlier and is still going on today.

First we need to define what Crusade means. Military conflicts have gone on for millennia but they're not considered Crusades. Different types of conflicts have different names. A Crusade is Roman Catholic; a feud is between two families like the Hatfields and McCoys – not between states or even neighbors – it's reserved for fights between families; and if a crusade is called for by the Caliph of Islam, it's called a Jihad.

One difference lies with sponsorship. If one country wants to beat up another country – it's not a crusade. If one family wants to beat up another family – we know what that is – it's a feud, not a crusade. If a Roman Catholic wants to beat up someone and the Pope approves, you have a crusade! Only Roman Catholics are allowed on crusade – the pope says so. The Pope usually, but not always, issued a papal bull that called for a Crusade and with a specific goal to be achieved. As will be seen, the Pope may act after the fact to garner accolades.

Another difference is that it is a multinational response – armies from different nations come together to fight a common enemy. All well and good, right? Well, yes, sort of... there were those French crusades – 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> I think. No problem, it wasn't a French army, it was a Burgundian one and an Aquitanian one – more than one nation – hence, multinational. How about the 9<sup>th</sup>? The English one? Again there had to be some Scots, some Welsh, and a few Irish – multinational!

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Fair enough but ... weren't there other multinational campaigns against Muslims that were called for by a papal bull? *Good question* (he typed rather snarkily). Pope Nicholas II granted Sicily to Roberto Guiscard in 1059 and the right or duty to take it from the Muslim occupiers; in 1064 Pope Alexander II ordered the seizure of Barbastro in Aragón from the Muslims; on 30 April 1073 Gregory VII granted *plenary indulgences* for all who went on crusade against the Muslim occupiers on the Iberian Peninsula in the bull *omnibus principis in terram Hyspaniae*; and then there was the 1087 crusade against Mahdia in which Genoan & Pisan merchants were pitted against the Muslim forces in this port city of Tunisia. This was, in fact, retaliation for several raids on merchant vessels by Mahdian corsairs. But this time Pope Victor III issued a papal bull and granted plenary indulgences against Mahdia which makes it, if not a crusade, then a prequel to the crusades. These are not included with the others when talking about the Crusades because .... Well ... they just aren't. What is and what isn't a crusade versus a Crusade is subjective.

Plenary Indulgence: an Indulgence is what you get by going to Confession – a reduction in the severity of the sins committed. A Plenary Indulgence is a particular or specific Indulgence – you do 'A' and you get 'B'. Recent Plenary Indulgences were issued on 20 March 2020. They are the three *coronavirus*

plenary indulgences: the first is granted for a minimum of reciting the Apostles Creed, the Lord's Prayer and a prayer concerning the Virgin Mary; the second is granted for an offering for an end to the pandemic with the easiest of the offerings being to go to a Church and *adore* the Eucharist or to read the Bible for 30 minutes; the third indulgence is reserved to the victims of the pandemic *at the hour of their death*. The usual restriction on indulgences granted at the time of death being reserved to those who are accustomed to saying some prayers during their life appear to have been relaxed for Covid-19 deaths. It's like automatically getting a 'Get out of Purgatory' card because you died from Covid-19. That's the 'A' part; the 'B' part has been harder to pinpoint since 1967. Before then, the work *Raccolta* (no, put the ricotta away) told you what you had to do 'A' to get 40 days off 'B'. Since then the Church refers to the work *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, which is conveniently available only written in Latin, to find out the 'A' and 'B' stuff. For the Crusading period the 'A' was *killing a Muslim* and the 'B' was *'Pass St Peter at the Gate.'*



These are the nine numbered Crusades that are typically found in most references but there are other classifications that exist. Some list as few as five while others include a dozen or more. This work sticks to the traditional nine of public education in 20<sup>th</sup> century United States of America.

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1096 – 1099	First Crusade
1147 – 1149	Second Crusade
1189 – 1192	Third Crusade
1202 – 1204	Fourth Crusade
1217 – 1221	Fifth Crusade
1228 – 1229	<i>Sixth Crusade</i>
1248 – 1254	Seventh Crusade
1270	Eighth Crusade
1271 – 1272	Ninth Crusade

These nine crusades take up just 24 years of the 176-year span, somewhat less than 15% of the total. What about the other 85% of the time? It was anything but peaceful. The Crusade may have ended, the crusading did not; individuals and contingents constantly arrived in the Levant resulting in the Lesser Crusades,

single battles, crusades that originated in the newly formed Crusader States and attacked remaining Muslim strongholds like Ascalon or Tyre. Some were very significant events, historically, while others were important locally. The following is a list of those events that are included in this work.

1096	Massacre of the Jews in the Rhineland
1100	Siege of Haifa
1101	Crusade of the Faint-Hearted
1102 – 1109	Crusaders besiege Tripoli and found second crusader state
1104	Battle of Harran, <i>Crusaders</i> besiege Durrës
1107 – 1111	Norwegian Crusade
1115	Battle of Tell Danith
1119	Field of Blood
1122 – 1124	Venetian Crusade
1125	Battle of Azaz
1144	Fall of Edessa
1164	Battle of Harenc
1169	Siege of Damietta
1177 – 1187	Ayyubid-Crusader Wars
1197	Emperor's Crusade
1228 – 1243	Jerusalem Civil War
1239	Baron's Crusade
1265	Kingdom of Jerusalem attacked
1266	County of Tripoli <u>attacked</u> & Saphed falls
1267	Rhenish Crusade
1268	Fall of Jaffa & Antioch

ix

As you just read, the first action was the mass slaughter of Jews in Germany. What did it matter? You had your *Get out of Jail Free* card – signed, sealed, and delivered by none other than the Pope. You still needed to atone because your victim did not qualify under the *murder-waiver* provision of your contract. Easy! To atone, all you had to do was fulfill your contract by *not-murdering* a Muslim, any Muslim, *after* slaughtering a Jew or ten, and the *Pearly Gates* stayed open for you 24/7. *Tidy.*





# **PREFACE**

**1096**

# RHINELAND MASSACRE

## OF THE JEWS

Chronologically, the first crusader-style confrontation began before the forces had made it into Germany. Count Emicho of Leiningen, with his army of 10,000, descended on the Jewish population along the Rhine River. Metz was attacked on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, followed by Speyer two days later. Eight hundred Jews were slaughtered on 18<sup>th</sup> of May at Worms and eleven hundred at Mainz on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Cologne was attacked on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May despite the Count accepting a very large bribe to leave the city. Emicho and his army found their way out of Germany blocked at the Hungarian border at Moson. Apprised of what had transpired, the military garrison and the townsmen were enraged by this unholy mob and they set upon the army, killing nearly everyone. One has to wonder how this force would have fared when confronted with a truly formidable foe such as that to be found in the East. Those that managed to escape continued on with the Crusade under Hugh de Vermandois. So horrific were the pogroms that Pope Calixtus II issued the first of several bulls aimed at stopping the anti-Jewish hate though the Papacy had issued letters to the same effect for over six centuries before the first Papal bull was issued. The first was *Sicut Iudaeis* issued around 1120 and it proved to be so effective that not-less-than eighteen additional bulls had to be issued by a like number of Popes over the next three centuries. Jews were not to be converted by force, suffer loss of property or discrimination in employment or housing. The Church also allowed for the use of a badge to identify Jews in public – and thus the infamous yellow Star of David was brought forth by the Roman Catholic Church over 700 years ago; with sadistic irony, atheistic Nazi

Germany modeled their behavior following the dictates of the Roman Catholic Church. The exorbitant taxes levied on Jews was not only allowed but encouraged. Despite one face calling for compassion and fair treatment, the other face sanctioned their expulsion from France, England, Spain, and Portugal.

Those numbered among the force of Count Emicho include a father-and-son duo that are one of the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> great-grandfathers of the author, Enguerrand I de Coucy and his son Thomas de Marle; both escaped from the decimation of Emicho's army at Moson and continued on to Jerusalem.



# **CHAPTER 1**

**1096 – 1099**

# THE FIRST CRUSADE

The First Crusade was launched when Pope Urban II gave a sermon on 25 November 1095 in Clermont, calling for a force to help their brethren, the Eastern Christians, who were being attacked in Anatolia by the Seljuk Turks and in Syria and Palestine by the Arab Fatimid dynasty based in Cairo. A secondary theater for Western Christians was on the Iberian Peninsula where the Moors held sway in most of present-day Portugal and Spain. Clarified in four letters, he declared that while killing was a sin, it was only such if the victim was a human and he declared that Muslims were not human and it followed that killing a Muslim was not a sin. But he went one step farther – he reasoned that since killing a Muslim was good for the Kingdom of Heaven, such good deeds would be rewarded by God. Urban reaped more down-to-Earth, tangible benefits too. The Papacy was a contested seat at this time with Clement III seated in Rome. He asked the French to stop in Rome and clear the throne of Saint Peter for his arrival.

The campaign in the East included the proviso that conquered lands were to be returned to the Eastern Roman Empire but the Crusaders ignored their oaths immediately. The first true target once they crossed into Syria was the heavily fortified town of Antioch. Before that confrontation even began Baldwin of Boulogne and his 300 knights headed east to capture the town of Edessa. The first Crusader state, the county of Edessa, was created on 10 March 1098. Bohemond of Taranto led the remaining forces and besieged Antioch starting in

October 1097. After being resupplied by sea with ships from Genoa, the city fell in June 1098 and the second Crusader state was created, the Principality of Antioch. It was immediately besieged by the relieving Muslim army which arrived less than a week after the city fell to the crusaders. During this siege a sizeable number of crusaders escaped the ensuing famine and made their way back to Europe. Bohemond not only refused to honor his vow to the Eastern Roman Emperor Alexios I, he attacked the Eastern Roman forces garrisoning the Imperial port city of Latakia using the Pisan fleet to blockade the port. After leaving, the Pisan fleet was destroyed by a Venetian fleet near Rhodes.

Godfrey of Bouillon took over as leader of the now depleted Crusader army and finally drew up before their prize – Jerusalem – in June 1099. The first city under the Fatimids of Egypt to be attacked fell in less than a month. The final battle of the First Crusade occurred at Ascalon. The Crusader forces met and repelled the Muslim forces of the Fatimid sultanate of Egypt.

The creation of the leading Crusader state, at least on paper, soon followed – the Kingdom of Jerusalem was created after some mopping-up actions occurred. The obvious choice for the Kingdom's new capital was Jerusalem after all, Antioch had Antioch and Edessa had Edessa. However the Crusaders decided to buck the trend and chose Acre as the capital, well, they foresaw Acre being the capital as it had not been taken yet. The Kingdom of Jerusalem held fast until 1187 and was replaced by the Kingdom of Acre in 1191. The Kingdom of Jerusalem was re-established in 1240 though it lasted just four years. Western accounts claim it lasted until 1291 but that is only true if you ignore the destruction and desolation of the eponymous city in 1244 after which it was useless to both Christian and Muslim alike until it was rebuilt during the next century.

Each of the leaders grew very wealthy in the process and realized that even greater wealth was in their future if they kept the lands as their personal property. The vows they made to the Emperor of the East seem to have not mattered one wit as it was unilaterally decided they would keep the states they created. They justified their decision by claiming to hold the land for the Pope while ignoring the fact that they had always been a part of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire and the Pope had ordered them to return it to the rule of the Eastern Roman Empire. Not only did the Byzantine Emperor count for nothing, the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Pope counted for the same or less. Anti-Jewish laws were enacted which prohibited any Jew from living in Jerusalem, and probably from several other cities as well; it would be 88 years before that changed. Oddly, one does not read of any similar proscriptions against Muslims.

The life of some of the Crusader states was surprisingly short and their allegiance to Rome quickly switched to Constantinople when such a switch benefited the petty rulers.

Among the author's ancestors present at this First Crusade were the aforementioned ENGUERRAND I DE COUCY and his son THOMAS DE MARLE. In December 1096 their scouting party was attacked; one of them, either father or son, tore the squirrel fur from their cloaks from which they made makeshift banners and were able to defeat the enemy because they were able to coordinate their defense and attacks. To commemorate this act, their Coat-of-Arms included bands of *squirrel fur*. Depicted at right are both the old style (l) and new style (r).



Other ancestors included GERARD DE GOURNAY serving under Duke Robert Curthose; his wife EDITHA DE WARENNE accompanied him and stayed for the full three years of the Crusade. Gerard returned to Jerusalem on pilgrimage in 1104 and died there. SIMON DE ST LIZ, Earl of Northampton and Huntingdon, returned to Northampton in 1100 and commenced building the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in that city. He returned to Jerusalem on a peaceful pilgrimage in 1115 but fell ill on the return trip. Making it to the Abbey of the Blessed Mary de Caritate in the Loire valley, he died and was buried there in that year.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, AUBREY (1) DE VERE participated in the Siege of Antioch (21 October 1097 - 2 June 1098) but after that, the record is silent.

The tally is now one 26<sup>th</sup>, three 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, and one 29<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents.

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<sup>3</sup> John C. Cox and RM Serjeantson. A History of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Northampton (1897) pp. 22 - 25.





## **CHAPTER 2**

**1100 – 1144**

# FROM THE SIEGE OF HAIFA TO THE FALL OF EDESSA

The Second Crusade would not start for almost a half-a-century but that does not mean that peace reigned over the Crusader States, Cyprus, Armenian Cilicia, Damascus, Baghdad, and Egypt. Not by any means.

**1100 – SIEGE OF HAIFA:** The Jewish held port of Haifa resisted all attempts to be incorporated into a crusader state and with good reason. The Jewish population of Jerusalem had been almost wiped out by the massacre that followed the fall of the city in 1098. This was followed up a law that barred all Jews from living in that city causing many to question exactly why these Frankish knights were here and who was paying them to be here? The city was besieged by the ships of the Venetian Republic followed by (surprise) the massacre of thousands of Jewish inhabitants by the crusaders. For its pivotal role, the Venetians parlayed their part of the spoils – Haifa itself – into a third of the city of Acre instead.

## **1101 – CRUSADE OF THE FAINT-HEARTED**

So-called because the deserters of the siege of Antioch were, to put it politely, *faint-hearted*. Such a large number of participants in the First Crusade never made it to Jerusalem for one reason or another; some deserted as they crossed Anatolia, many more deserted during the Siege of Antioch – most tellingly one noble fled in the face of a minor enemy foray, leaving his brother who had fallen from his

saddle, to his own fate. In fact the numbers were so large, almost immediately Pope Eugenius III realized he had a subservient audience: do as he says or risk excommunication and eternity in hell. The Pope wasn't the only one to use what was widely perceived to be cowardice to their advantage. The wives were particularly viscous in their unrelenting attacks belittling their spouse's masculinity, virility, and right to govern. So back they went. There were three northern engagements and one southern one. The northern three were the Battle of Mersivan in early summer and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Battles of Heraclea in August and September, respectively.



The southern engagement was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ramla. The town of Ramla lay on the road between the coastal city of Ascalon and the city of Jerusalem and had to be taken by the Crusaders if they wanted to secure their southern border and to expand in that direction. The army of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was victorious over that of Fatimid Egypt on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September in 1101 it had proved so costly in men that Fatimid control of Ramla remained. This was to be rectified by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Ramla between the same forces on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May in the following year. It was not and the Crusaders suffered another bruising defeat.

The author counts Hugh IV de Lusignan, the comte de la Marche, among his ancestors that participated in and died at the battle of Ramla.

**1102 – CRUSADERS BESIEGE TRIPOLI:** In 1102, before the Crusade of the Faint-Hearted had ended, the siege of Tripoli began. It would last 7 years and end with the formation of the fourth Crusader state in 1109 – the County of Tripoli. The city fell on 12 July and was sacked with the one hundred thousand volumes of the Dar-em-Ilm library burned. The first count was Raymond IV of Toulouse and his realm covered an area roughly approximating Lebanon today.

**1104 – BATTLE OF HARRAN:** In 1104 the forces of Antioch and Edessa ventured out to take the strategically located city of Harran. The armies fell into a trap laid by the enemy but the commander of the Antioch army foresaw the outcome and fled the field while the army of Edessa was destroyed. Edessa became a client-state of Antioch for the remainder of its short life.

**1104 – SIEGE OF DYRRHACHIUM (DURRËS):** From 1104 the expansion of Antioch was at the expense of the Eastern Roman Empire as Tarsus and Latakia were captured. The Emperor attacked Antioch unsuccessfully which was poor timing as the Prince of Antioch was in Southern Italy raising troops from the lands of his kinsmen for the next attack on the forces of Islam. The Prince responded in kind and laid siege to Dyrrhachium, a western outpost of the Empire on the shores of the Adriatic. The new Antiochene recruits were soundly defeated in 1108 and the Treaty of Devol was definitely not negotiated; it was given to the Prince to sign.

The clauses made the Principality of Antioch a vassal state that was granted as an Imperial fief to the ex-prince for his lifetime after which it came under direct Imperial rule. The ruler was now a duke and the county of Edessa which was a



tributary state to Antioch remained inheritable though under Imperial authority. The duke was made the ruler of the Imperial fief of Aleppo and it was, perhaps, the clause that rendered the whole of the treaty pointless for all practical purposes. Tellingly, its grant as an Imperial fief came with a string or two attached. Such a grant could only be done once Antioch had been granted back to the Empire for direct control while the duke would be able to maintain the semi-independent nature that came with fiefdom, a tributary state rather than a full part of the Empire. This clause could be, and was, interpreted in different ways. First, the concept of granting a city that may never become the prerogative of the Empire to grant could be interpreted as being fanciful and, if this clause was deemed fanciful, it was only logical for the other clauses being held to the same standard, i.e. they were just as fanciful. (This was the interpretation the prince favored.) In another more optimistic interpretation the capture of the city was an *a priori fait accompli* and this clause merely set forth the parameters of its governance. (This was the interpretation of the Emperor and since he wrote the treaty, it is the correct interpretation.). So, at least on paper, the Empire regained some of the territories that had been promised to be returned – Antioch and Edessa. Reality was a different story but the Treaty of Devlo was the footing upon which full resorption into the Empire would be realized in a few decades.

**1107 – 1111 NORWEGIAN CRUSADE:** The King of Norway, Sigurd Madnussun, was the first European monarch to lead a crusade. He embarked in 1107 with a fleet of 60 ships and about 7,500 men and spent three years raiding Muslim held lands in Iberia and the Mediterranean islands of Ibiza and Minorca before landing at Acre in summer 1110. Consulting with Baldwin, King of Jerusalem,

the agreed target was Sidon. Baldwin and his army marched while Sigurd and his men sailed to the city north of Tyre reaching their destination in mid-November. After a 47-day siege, during which time assistance came from a Venetian fleet, the Crusade reached its climax in December when the Norwegians pulled boats close under the walls on the seaward side and scaled them. The men there were surprised as they have never experienced an attack in which men climbed the walls out of the sea! With the taking of Sidon only the two port cities of Tyre and Ascalon remained in Muslim hands on the whole of the Levantine coast.



**1115 – BATTLE OF TELL DANITH:** In 1115 the armies of all four Crusader states, with support of Armenian troops from the Cilician Kingdom, formed an alliance with the Shiite Muslim forces from Damascus and northern Syria. Their common enemy was the Baghdad-based Seljuk Turk, Sunni Sultanate which was intent upon recapturing the whole of Syria and Palestine for their empire. At the Battle of Tell Danith (Battle of Sarmin) on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September the Seljuk Turks were surprised and routed by the Antiochene army acting alone and this ended future attempts by the Seljuk Turks to invade Syrian lands.

**1119 – FIELD OF BLOOD:** In 1119 the Antiochene army met the same fate that the Edessan army had at the Battle of Harran. Alliances change and the Crusaders were once again fighting against the Muslim army from Northern Syria. They met in battle near Sarmada on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June where the Crusaders were encircled and completely annihilated, leaving Antioch virtually undefended at the moment. What became known as the Field of Blood was the beginning of the decline of the Principality of Antioch. Having no field army meant becoming a vassal state and, if the choices available, Jerusalem was the one with the men to force the issue and the one on the scene. Antioch became a vassal state to the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

**1122 – 1124 VENETIAN CRUSADE:** Though no Papal bull was issued, Calixtus II instigated the crusade by forwarding an appeal for help sent from Baldwin II to the Venetian Republic. He signaled his approval by sending the papal banner to the Venetians and granted crusader privileges to participants at the First Council of the Lateran in December 1122.

The Venetian Republic had held back from the First Crusade to see what the future held before committing to anything. They were a nation based on trade

and their partners included the Fatimids in Egypt and the Seljuk Turks in Anatolia. They were willing to forgo the immediate rewards reaped by their rivals in Pisa and Genoa in exchange for the much greater rewards that came from having a singular goal – the expansion of their trading empire through the proliferation of ports and domination of nations. In the two decades following the First Crusade they were instrumental in capturing the port cities of Latakia (from the Eastern Roman Empire), Haifa (from the predominantly Jewish population), and Sidon. Sailing from their safe harbors, the Venetian warships put in at the Imperial island port cities of Chios, Lesbos, Rhodes and Cyprus for a bit of souvenir gathering, i.e. sacking, they finally dropped anchor in Acre in April 1123. They first destroyed the Egyptian fleet and followed this up by a masterful attack on the future crusader port city of Tyre. Their enemy was the Crusader states and the Venetians handily beat these trading novices as 1124 dawned. First, they pointed to how quickly they had cleared the waters of Egyptians; and second, they refused to do more until the demands were met. For their continued participation, they were paid a large sum up front ‘to cover expenses’ and they secured lucrative terms – exemption from all tolls and customs charges – at any port and a part of any city they assisted in taking to go along with the third of Acre they held since 1100. The siege began on 15 February 1124 and negotiations for peace were opened by Damascus in June with Tyre being surrendered on the 29<sup>th</sup> with the lives and property of all citizens, whether they decided to stay or move, guaranteed. Venice gained a particularly well-placed major Mediterranean seaport. The Venetians departed for home and sacked and pillaged their way along the coast of Asia Minor and Greek islands of the Aegean and Adriatic just because they could.

**1125 – BATTLE OF AZAZ:** 11 June 1125 – the Battle of Azaz saw the combined forces of Aleppo and Damascus soundly defeated.

**1144 – FALL OF EDESSA:** the County of Edessa fell in 1144 with large swaths of eastern Antioch being reclaimed by the armies of Islam by 1160.

To the tally of the author’s ancestors is added one more: HUGH IV DE LUSIGNAN, *comte de la Marche*, who died at the Second Battle of Ramla on 17 May 1102 – the breakdown is: one 26<sup>th</sup>, three 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, one 29<sup>th</sup>, & one 30<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents.





## **CHAPTER 3**

**1147 – 1149**

# THE SECOND CRUSADE

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# THE WENDISH CRUSADE

The Wendish Crusade is usually treated as the northern theater of the Second Crusade. Pope Eugenius III had to issue three papal bulls for the Second Crusade; the first made it a possibility, the second a probability and the third a reality. *Quantum praedecessores* was issued from Vetralla in Central Italy to Louis VII of France on 1 December 1145, and reissued on 1 March 1146, calling for military expedition to the Holy Land to recapture the County of Edessa. The Muslims had expelled the European invaders in 1144. Two kings, Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany, agreed to lead the crusade. Not having enough bull, Pope Eugenius issued a pair of bulls as a set named *Divina dispensatione*. These were issued to address the poor response to both of the first

bulls. The first in this pair of bulls was issued on 5 October 1146 and called for the support of the Italian clergy which is surprising since one would assume a bull would not be necessary, but it was. The second of the pair, thus the third bull to be issued (not counting the second issue of the first bull as a separate bull) was done so on 11 April 1147; it addressed the issue of distance. If someone wanted to kill with Church blessings, they no longer had to travel such great distances for the enemies of the Church were close at hand – the Slavs. The Baltic region provided luxurious animal pelts, great grazing for livestock, fertile fields for growing, pleasant weather, plenty of amenities for travelers – the perfect target for the Catholic who wanted to murder but didn't like the heat – resulting in the Wendish Crusade. The profusion of bulls did not bode well for the venture – the *Quantum praedecessores* of 1145 and 1146 was one bull or were two bulls? As for *Divina dispensatione*, are they two bulls with the same name or is each one just half-a-bull?

The Wendish Crusade was a mixed bag of results – a dozen Crusading leaders from the small states within the Holy Roman Empire and two kings from Denmark attacked three Slavic leaders of states in the northeast part of the Empire. When the swinging stopped, all the leaders were still alive and pretty much seated in the same lands as before. No leader was convinced to convert in either direction. Many civilian non-combatants were forced to flee or died from wounds or hunger following the pillaging of the area and many infantrymen on both sides paid with their lives – just how much the dead mattered is shown by the fact the getting a number of men in the armies or the number killed on each side is impossible so all there is to document this loss of life are some guesses. But the fact that none of the leaders on either side died is noted.

Back to the main Crusader force, once in the Middle East, plans were changed. The taking of Damascus would bring them much more glory back home and much more booty to line their pockets. In a classic tale of counting ones chickens before the eggs had hatched, the leaders of the expedition quarreled and quibbled amongst themselves as to which one of them would rule the city, its fall considered a foregone conclusion. After weeks of argument while a desultory siege caused many to lose their lives, it was finally agreed that the Count of Flanders would be in command. Rumors and accusations immediately followed – the Templars had been bribed by the enemy; the Kingdom of Jerusalem was being targeted for takeover by the Kings of France and of Germany who coveted the monies earned from pilgrims; each suspected the other. They regrouped and moved their point of attack from one where they had been making headway to a different part of the city walls which were known to be much more difficult. Realizing their folly, they returned to the original location only to find all their

work had been fully repaired, and then some. Rumors of an approaching Muslim army heralded the end of the failed Crusade. Conrad III had had enough and left the Holy Land for Germany. Louis soon followed suit and the Second Crusade closed with nothing gained.<sup>4</sup>

Ancestors of the author who participated in the Second Crusade include the indomitable ELEANOR DE RAMNULFIDS, *Duchesse d'Aquitaine*, better known as ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE. Others include HUGH II DE GOURNAY and his half-brother HENRI I DE CHAMPAGNE, *Comte de Champagne* fighting under KING LOUIS VII; ROGER (3) DE MOWBRAY who killed a Muslim leader in single combat in July or August 1147; and ENGUERRAND I DE COUCY who was killed in 1149.

This brings the total to a dozen: one 24<sup>th</sup>, one 25<sup>th</sup>, two 26<sup>th</sup>, four 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents.

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<sup>4</sup> G. P. R. James. *The History of Chivalry*, Second Edition (Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London; 1830) pp. 210-211. <http://www.elfinspell.com/Chivalry10.html>



# **CHAPTER 4**

**1164 – 1187**

# THE BATTLE OF HARENC

*through the*

## AYYUBID-CRUSADER WARS

In 1159 Antioch became an Imperial fief. Since 1119, when the Antiochean army was destroyed at the Field of Blood, the state could not defend itself on its own. However, this time the other Crusader states were preoccupied with their own defense issues and there was little hope of military aid coming from them. Antioch looked to the other regional powers – Armenian Cilicia and the Eastern Roman Empire. The former had been attacked more than once by Antioch and weren't too keen on the idea but they did not want to be surrounded by lands with Imperial backing. Unfortunately there was little they could do with the Empire enjoying a resurgent phase and threatening their own sovereignty. Antioch was soon brought under the rule and protection of the Eastern Emperor John II Komnenos, or so the Antiochenes say. Remember the 1108 Treaty of Devol – you know the one that made Antioch an Imperial fief? Well it was now time to enforce the terms of that treaty which was backed up by the presence of a formidable Imperial army camped outside the city. Sixty years after-the-fact and the return of Imperial lands became a reality.

**1164 – BATTLE OF HARENC :** In July 1164 a coalition of forces from Antioch & Tripoli, accompanied by their associated Templar knights, the Eastern Roman Empire and the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia advanced to relieve the besieged

castle and city of Harenc (Harem) in Syria which was under attack by the forces of Nur al-Din. Harenc was on the main road between Antioch and Aleppo and was the site of a fortified castle since the Eastern Roman Empire built one there in 959. It soon fell to the Arabs, and then the Seljuk Turks, before being taken by the Crusaders in 1097. The Arabs took it again in 1149 but four years later it was back in Crusader hands and, now, Nur al-Din wanted it back.

Numbered with the coalition forces was the preceptor, or regional commander, of the Tripolitan Templar forces, Gilbert de Lacy, who was about 60 at the time. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Lacy of Ludlow had transferred the barony to Robert, his eldest son and heir, in 1158 and entered the Templar order. He was made a *Precentor* in/for England almost immediately and is found in Paris as a Templar guarantor of the peace between Louis VII of France and Henry II of England two years later. Before the end of the year 1160, he was relieved of guarantor duty and made his way to Outremer, literally 'over the seas.' By 1162 he had been chosen or appointed the commander of Templar forces in the County of Tripoli.

The coalition forces arrived and almost immediately engaged with what at first appeared to be a skirmish but quickly turned into a full-fledged battle at nearby Artah on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August. The Battle of Harenc was brought to a victorious close with the killing, enslaving, or capturing of virtually every member of the coalition forces. The coalition leaders were all captured including Raymond III, Count of Tripoli; Bohemond III, Prince of Antioch; Joscelin III, *titular* Count of Edessa; and Hugh VIII de Lusignan. As the commander of the Tripolitan Templars, Gilbert de Lacy, was undoubtedly at the head of his knights and was either taken prisoner or killed at Artah. All the captives would spend the next decade in prison in Aleppo. While nothing has been found specifically about Gilbert in the records, Raymond III was the first of the Tripolitan prisoners to negotiate a ransom. The amount was a staggering 400,000 dinars which equates to 750 pounds of gold! Negotiations had lasted a decade and Raymond finally gained his freedom in 1174. Almost immediately he went on the attack, targeting Homs, one of Nur al-Din's centers of support in northern Syria. He ended the assault by striking up an agreement with the opposition leader that included releasing every man who had been captured at Artah a decade earlier – which means there must have still been many prisoners to ransom. The last appearance of Gilbert's name dates to 1163; beyond this it's only speculation. Many researchers have assumed he either died at the battle or in captivity but, if he had just reached 60, he may very well have lived into the 1180s.

**1169 – SIEGE OF DAMIETTA:** began on 25 October when it launched from the Kingdom of Jerusalem with ships from the Eastern Empire and the support of



the Hospitallers, though the Templars pointedly refused. This was the fourth attempt of King Almaric I to take Damietta and had the same result – it failed. Mismanaged from the start, famine set in with each blaming the other; when Saladin arrived with his army, peace negotiations were started and the crusaders left on foot or under sail, never to return. Even their ignominious retreat was marred when several ships were lost in a storm off the coast near Ascalon on 21 December 1169.<sup>5</sup>

### 1177 – 1187 AYYUBID-CRUSADER WAR

Started with the Battle of Montgisard in 1177; included the defeat of the Crusader army of Jerusalem by the Ayyubid Sultan Salah ad-Din, or Saladin, at the Battle of Hattin in July 1187; and culminated with the siege of Jerusalem which began on 20 September 1187 and its surrender just 19 days later on the 9<sup>th</sup> of October. Acre, Sidon, and Beirut capitulated without a fight after the fall of Jerusalem. With the return of Muslim control, Jews were once again allowed to live in the city of Jerusalem. Only the city of Tyre remained to the Crusaders. When he learned of the loss of *Outremer*, Pope Gregory VIII issued *Audita tremendi* on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1187, the papal Bull calling for another Crusade to capture Jerusalem again. The Ayyubid occupation of Jerusalem lasted until 1191.

Ancestors participating in these expeditions include two who returned for a second time: HENRI I, the *comte de Champagne* who was on campaign from 1179 to early 1181, after which he returned to Champagne where he died on 17 March 1181; and ROGER (3) DE MOWBRAY who was captured at the Battle of Hattin on 4 July 1187 and died the following year in Acre.

Others appearing for the first time include HUGH VIII DE LUSIGNAN, *Seigneur de Taillebourg & Fontenay* who was captured at the Battle of Harenc, dying in prison in Aleppo between 1165 and 1171; HUGH LE BIGOD, *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Norfolk* who was killed at the same battle in July 1164; WILLIAM MARSHALL, *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Pembroke*, aka *EARL MARSHALL*, who was on Crusade from 1183 to 1186; and GILBERT DE LACY, *3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Lacy of Ludlow* and *Preceptor of the Tripolitan Templars*, whose service remains uncertain but was most likely killed at Artah on 12 August 1162 or captured and imprisoned in Aleppo where he died sometime before 1174.

The total number of the author's great-grandparents who participated is sixteen: two 24<sup>th</sup>, one 25<sup>th</sup>, four 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/siege\\_damietta\\_1169.html](http://www.historyofwar.org/articles/siege_damietta_1169.html). Inexplicably, G. P. R. James. *The History of Chivalry* (H Colburn & R Bentley, London; 1830) pp. 289-293. <http://www.elfinspell.com/Chivalry14> places the siege in 1217.



# **CHAPTER 5**

**1189 – 1192**

# THE THIRD CRUSADE

The papal bull *Audita tremendi*, issued by Pope Gregory VIII on 29 October 1187, called for another Crusade in response to the fall of Jerusalem to the Muslim leader Saladin the previous month. Known as the Kings' Crusade because three European monarchs had taken the Cross: Henry II (8 – 9,000 men), Philip II (7,000 men), and Frederick I (12 – 15,000 men), of England and, France, and Germany, respectively. Henry's son Richard of Aquitaine also took the cross and his men were part of the 8 – 9,000 combined force. Henry II died, and Richard, following in the footsteps of his mother Eleanor led the English and Aquitanian forces. The three monarchs took the war to the Egyptian-based Ayyubid Sultanate in Palestine. Richard I bled both of his realms dry with the *Saladin tax*. The tale of the Crusade needs to be interrupted with stories of the chore of moving large armies from Western Europe to Palestine. Frederick I (Barbarossa) of Germany took the overland route, marching through the Balkans to Constantinople. He was the Western Roman Emperor, or Holy Roman Emperor, a position that had never been recognized by the Roman Emperor in the East since Charlemagne's

coronation as such – there was one Roman Emperor and he lived in Constantinople. Despite this Frederick, as King of the Germans, was feted in the city before beginning the long march across the Anatolian plateau. Leaving the Principality of Armenian Cilicia and crossing into Syria, he decided to, depending on your source – (1) bathe in (2) have a swim to cool off in (3) swim across or (4) fell from his horse when it lost its footing in – the Göksu River (today the Saleph River in southeast Turkey near the Syrian border). Whichever the reason he had for being in the river, it was an unwise one since he could not swim. He drowned on 10 June 1190 in the Göksu and much of his army did an about-face and marched back to Germany. What remained of the Imperial army was taken over by Leopold V of Austria who arrived in spring 1191. Richard had sailed his force from France to Sicily where he conquered the capital of Palermo and freed his sister, and former Queen, from the prisons of her son Tancred, the future Prince of Galilee. Richard set sail for Acre but while sailing

*A tempest soon dispersed his fleet, and three of the vessels were lost upon the rocky shores of Cyprus. The monarch of that island, one of the Comneni of Constantinople, had rendered himself independent of Greece, and had taken the title of Emperor. In the madness of insatiable greediness, he pillaged the crews and passengers of the English vessels stranded on his coast, and refused a refuge to the bride and sister of Richard himself, when driven by the storm into the port of Limisso.<sup>6</sup>*

One of our ancestors lost his life as he was aboard one of the three wrecked ships. A fifth Crusader state, the Kingdom of Cyprus, was created by Richard and ruled by the House of Lusignan for the next three centuries – it would be the last of the Crusader states to fall.

Philip II arrived in Acre during May 1191 and after a brief participation in the siege of Acre, he felt he was needed back in his kingdom to press his claim to Flanders whose ruler had recently died and, rather than argue with his vassal Richard, as duke of Aquitaine, he boarded a ship in August leaving his 7,000-man army behind; he would never live-down the abandonment of his men or his pledge. Richard succeeded in capturing Acre, a great feat, but he followed up on this triumph with one of the most appalling ‘crimes against humanity’ in all of written history. Richard marched 3,000 Ayyubid prisoners-of-war on to a small mound east of



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<sup>6</sup> G.P.R. James. The History of Chivalry, Second Edition; (Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, London; 1830) p. 42.  
<http://www.elfinspell.com/Chivalry12.html>

Acre called the *Ayyadieh* in full view of Saladin and his men. Some accounts state that women and children were included while others are silent on the matter; it is not possible to categorically state that women and children were spared. Their hands tied behind them, the prisoners were forced to their knees or remained standing as Richard's soldiers dispatched them with their swords. The tale that each was beheaded was propaganda for shock-value only; beheading is difficult and strenuous and it is doubtful that the weapons or expertise required were present in sufficient numbers to effect nearly 3,000 murders in a single day. The *Massacre of Ayyadieh* took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1191; it was allegedly answered in-kind when Saladin ordered the execution of 2,300 prisoners being held in Damascus (the story that the retaliatory strike occurred in the same place is false as prisoners were not held with the Muslim army). On the other hand, this approach was nothing new for Richard. Saladin had watched on in September 1187 as 250 knights, Templars and Hospitalers, were beheaded one at a time. Those experienced at doing such a deed completed the task with efficiency while those who had no experience whatsoever with such deeds hacked away at their pitiable victims. Even the mighty Saladin, normally in control of his vengeful side, strayed when confronted with Reynald of Châtillon, the fallen Prince of Antioch. For his attacks on the Hijaz, the way to Mecca, and for his many violations of treaties when attacking minimally armed caravans heading through supposedly safe territory, there was but one possible outcome. Well, two actually – Reynald could convert. Even experienced warriors sometimes miss the mark and, in this, Saladin excelled this time; he loped off an arm at the shoulder rather than beheading the fallen Prince who was unceremoniously dragged away and finished off by guards.

The *Massacre of Ayyadieh* did not ruin Richard's reputation; it merely confirmed it – not only among the Muslims, but for much of Catholic Europe. He was initially condemned for this act of brutality and many English and French nobles were disappointed and ashamed to have been associated with such a barbaric person and despicable act. Richard's acts came as no surprise to anyone who knew Richard, for he had done the same thing eight years earlier as he rampaged through Aquitaine, Brittany and Maine. In early February 1183 near Poitiers he executed every enemy combatant who was captured no matter their social status, the 'enemy' being the army of his older brother Henry. Not only did he murder his fellow Catholics, it caused no small amount of pain for his own men for now, the greatest part of their livelihood, the ransoming of especially well-heeled prisoners, was torn from them ... and they were condemned to Hell. He repeated the gruesome crime a few days later near Limoges at Gorre and later, when he returned to his castle at Aix, he had all prisoners drowned, blinded, or run

through with a sword. It did not matter one wit what faith his prisoners held to – they were all murdered. But the reversal of attitudes was quite quick in coming. A smear campaign was cleverly orchestrated in which the Muslims were painted with every possible lurid, inhumane activity possible – they bayoneted infants and roasted them alive before eating them; Catholic women were beaten and then raped by gangs of men who forced their husbands/children/fathers/mothers to watch, and then cut off their breasts before stomping on the heads, crushing their skulls before their booted feet – all the while the attackers really being attracted to the men as they were all known to be sodomites and pederasts. The stories circulated about all the young Catholic boys becoming the objects of sexual gratification for the Muslims still has a certain amount of cache today.

Against this backdrop, the inhumane slaughter of thousands of prisoners-of-war paled in comparison. Despite knowing full-well that the propaganda was used to reduce the repugnance of Richards's crimes, it is mystifying that Richard the Lionheart, who so disliked England he would have sold London if he could find a buyer, should be so venerated by the British to this day.<sup>7</sup> Richard did win two notable battles, at Arsuf and Jaffa, but, all-in-all, the Third Crusade was a failure. Before returning to Europe, Richard signed the *Treaty of Jaffa* on 2 September 1192; the humiliating terms he agreed to included:

- 1) A three-year truce on hostilities;
- 2) The Kingdom of Jerusalem would be replaced by the much-reduced *Kingdom of Acre*, encompassing about 10% of the old kingdom's area;
- 3) Crusader rule was *recognized* along the 300+ mile stretch of coastal land between Jaffa and Tyre as the *Kingdom of Acre*, provided that all travelers were equally protected, religious preferences notwithstanding; failing this the recognition would be revoked;
- 4) The recently-built Crusader fortress at Ascalon was to be destroyed, by the Crusaders; and
- 5) Safe access to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem for Catholics was guaranteed to the extent it was feasible and possible.

Calling it the *Treaty of Jaffa* is misleading; a deception that continues to be deliberately applied by and in the West to this day – treaties imply negotiations,

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<sup>7</sup> Perhaps no better example of this inexplicable demagoguery is 2017's *The Templars* by the prominent television historian Dan Jones. Describing what is perhaps the first recorded major crimes and atrocities committed against humanity, Jones writes "On Tuesday, August 20, Richard summarily massacred around twenty-six hundred Muslim prisoners on the plain of Acre, ..." One sentence. In the following paragraph he writes that the ferocity of the ensuing Muslim attacks was such because they were "determined to revenge the merciless slaughter of family members and friends outside Acre."

give-and-take, and compromise – from and on both parties. In the East, the victor showed his magnanimous nature through the *granting* of certain privileges and these were outlined in the *Concessions of Ramla*. Hardly the smashing victory portrayed by the West. The hoped-for conquest of the land of the former Kingdom of Jerusalem not only failed to materialize, the Kingdom itself continued only in the minds of the uncomprehending, or rather, deliberately misinformed, West. To those living in the East, it was gone; in its stead was the tiny coastal Kingdom of Acre which, granted, was a gain over holding only the city of Tyre. Three Crusader groups did make the pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher unopposed in October but Richard would have violated an oath he made to not enter Jerusalem until it was under Catholic control. It was not and he did not.

The Third Crusade had failed miserably; the Pope was incensed; many held Richard responsible. Of the three noble kings at the start of the Crusade, one drowned, the second never lived-down being seen as a coward, and the third's reputation as a barbarous, mass-murderer was confirmed though ignored – which says a lot about the people doing the ignoring, now as well as then.

RAOUL I DE COUCY, the great-grandson of ENGUERRAND I DE COUCY, adds a 26<sup>th</sup>-great-grandparent to the growing number which totals seventeen. He was killed during the siege of Acre in November 1191. Raoul's grandson of the same name died in Egypt at the Battle of Al-Mansurah in 1250; he is not a direct ancestor of the author. The ancestor who died when shipwrecked on the way to Middle East isn't counted among those who fought.





## **CHAPTER 6**

**1197**

# THE EMPEROR'S CRUSADE

To fulfill the vows made by his father (who drowned on the way to the Third Crusade) Holy Roman/German Emperor Henry VI signaled his intentions to mount a crusade during in March 1195. To fund such an endeavor he threatened the Eastern Roman Emperor Isaac II Angelos with invasion, destruction and usurpation. The blackmail worked and the citizens of the Eastern Empire dug deep into their pockets. Amassing a force of 3,000 knights, with a total headcount in the area of 16,000, the forces of the alternately-named German Crusade rendezvoused at Sicily before setting sail for Acre in August 1197. Henry VI played his family-part well – he never left Sicily; he died on 28 September, succumbing to the 'chill' he caught while hunting near Fiumedinisi. Henry's death was unannounced until well-after the forces arrived at Acre. The Kingdom of Acre was an isolated outpost separated from the County of Tripoli by more than 50 miles of Muslim-held Palestine. Jaffa was retaken by Muslim forces just as the Germans arrived. The *titular* King of Jerusalem fell out a window in his Acre palace and died on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September. From this inauspicious start, the Germans captured the Sidon and Beirut by the 24<sup>th</sup> of October. Once they recaptured the Castle of Gibelet the Kingdom of Acre was contiguous with the County of Tripoli again. In November the Germans were besieging the Crusader-

built, Muslim-occupied Toron Castle. Two factors brought the Crusade to close: news of the Holy Roman Emperor's death finally caught up with the army and Saladin was on the march from Egypt. Some quick thinkers, realizing that discretion is the better part of valor, abandoned the siege and negotiations began. A negotiated armistice was reached in June 1198 and by July most German nobles and soldiers were homeward bound as the nobles had to get back and have their domains reconfirmed by Henry VI's successor – or risk losing them. Outremer was stronger and larger when they left compared to when they arrived – but it wasn't French or English. This is why, despite being a great success story amongst the many failures, it is not among the numbered Crusades.



The duke of Brabant, HENRI DE REGINAR, adds a 24<sup>th</sup>-great-grandparent to the total number of the author's ancestors who fought in one or more of the battles or conflicts of the Crusades. He fought in the taking of Beirut which fell in October 1197 and became regent of the kingdom of Acre until Aimery de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, arrived in January 1198 to assume the titular title King of Jerusalem.

That's three 24<sup>th</sup>, one 25<sup>th</sup>, five 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents of the author who took part in the Crusades ... eighteen and counting!



# **CHAPTER 7**

**1202 – 1204**

# THE FOURTH CRUSADE

From the dismal failure of the Second and Third Crusades the Fourth took a decidedly downward turn which degenerated into the wanton destruction and pillaging of the greatest city in Europe. Unable to cope with the loss of Jerusalem, Pope Innocent III energetically preached for Crusade which he called for on 15 August 1198 in his bull *Post miserabile*. The call succeeded in raising an army of crusaders who, despite never making it to the Holy Land, enriched Western Europe with the largest amount plundered goods realized by any of the Crusades – never mind that it was pillaged from other Catholics – the very same Christians who had originally asked for assistance against Muslim incursions. The Venetian Republic agreed to build all the necessary ships for transport to Outremer but as the crusading force descended on the city it became evident that some serious miscalculations had taken place. The Crusaders had ordered three times the number of ships needed. Venice was not about to allow this bill to go unpaid but they allowed the Crusaders to venture down the coast a bit so they could get paid. Feigning a need to put into port to coordinate their sailing routes to the East, they had barely docked at Zara when the town, with a large Roman Catholic majority, was attacked and captured on 24 November 1202. This coastal city was under the protection of the Pope since being wrested away from the Venetian Republic several years earlier. Not wanting to sweat the small stuff, the

town was soon back in the Republic's hands and their debt was greatly reduced; the Pope was so incensed he excommunicated every Crusader involved. While there, they were introduced to a disgruntled claimant for the throne of Byzantium and, as the East drifted farther and farther into the distance, a new target emerged. The *Sack of Constantinople* had to satisfy the Pope in lieu of the taking of Jerusalem; true, the inhabitants were technically Catholics but they were not *Roman* Catholics. The Pope's anger was inversely proportional to the value of booty he received – the more booty, the less anger. He was further mollified when he was told he had 'the pick of the litter' and proceeded to methodically pick over the shiploads of booty stolen from the greatest Catholic city in the world. Whether he was suckered by this line, or not, he amassed a collection of pillaged relics and priceless objects without rival. What followed was the Latin Empire balanced precariously on top of Constantinople for 70 years. If you have ever admired the four great bronze stallions that adorn St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, you are looking at the results of the Fourth Crusade



(okay, *technically* you are not; the exterior bronzes are replicas; the real booty is inside). This Crusade showed that Islam was not the target or, for that matter, was any religion the target, *per se*. The goal was to conquer the land and reap the financial benefits. Whatever religion that held sway over that land had to be either usurped (*brought into the fold* is the euphemism preferred by

Church hierarchy) or eliminated whether it was Islam, Judaism, or any Catholic other than the Roman kind. The Orthodox Catholic Church was a target of the Roman Church long before the prophet Mohammed was even born. The rebirth of Western power in the Carolingian empire saw the expansionist tendencies of the West explode. All that was needed was a *casus belli* and the Emperor in the East supplied that rather unexpectedly. His unsolicited call to the Pope in the West for military assistance opened the door to the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire. Though the Latin Empire of the East would last less than a century, the Greek Empire could not fully recover – its territory had been carved into four separate states and they would never again coalesce into a single Empire until the Ottomans arrived in the Balkans in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The first Emperor of the Latin Empire was BALDWIN I DE FLANDERS, a 25<sup>th</sup>-great-grandfather of the author. He was crowned in Cathedral of Hagia Sophia in





Constantinople on 14 May 1204. Leading the Imperial Army to repel the invasion of Bulgarian forces under Tsar Kaloyan, Baldwin (*left*) was captured at the Battle of Adrianople on 14 April 1205. He died, allegedly in the *Baldwin Tower* of the Tsarevets fortress, in Velika Tarnovo, Bulgaria (*below*). It is said he was killed by Tsar Kaloyan in 'a fit of rage' brought on either by (a) the revolt of Philippopolis or (b) Baldwin's attempts to seduce the Tsar's wife. Legend has it that the Tsar made a drinking vessel from Baldwin's skull.



Count stands at 19: three 24<sup>th</sup>, two 25<sup>th</sup>, five 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup>.



## **CHAPTER 8**

**1217 - 1221**

# THE FIFTH CRUSADE

Despite the infamous failures of the Second, Third, and Fourth Crusades, successive Popes continued to preach for military expeditions to the Holy Land. In spring 1213, Pope Innocent III issued the papal bull *Quia maior*, calling for the recovery of the kingdom of Jerusalem. Pope Honorius III echoed the call in his *Ad Liberandam* in 1215. Leopold VI, Duke of Austria arrived in Acre during September 1217 followed by Andrew II, King of Hungary with contingents from Cyprus and Antioch slated to join with those of Acre. Almost immediately the leaders started arguing over who was the boss; famine set in; more than a few soldiers deserted. The squabbling continued until Andrew headed home; so did the princes of Cyprus and Antioch. Another German force arrived in March 1218 which kick-started the crusade. The right thing to do was to take Damietta since history proved this right. They had tried to take the city five times and failed each time. Damietta was the key to locking up the Egyptians in Egypt and they

were still being attacked. Logically, the capture of Damietta would stop the attacks – unless they sailed from Alexandria or came from Damascus or ....

The siege began in late spring 1218 and proceeded pretty much as one would expect. First, a guard tower on an island had to be taken so a floating fort was constructed ... and not securely anchored. Set free by the gales of a summer storm, the floating fort sailed right up to the tower where it was promptly attacked and set ablaze. Only two men survived to make it back to the crusader camp and in recognition of their bravery in the face of the enemy, the *King of Jerusalem* branded both cowards and ordered them to be executed immediately. This had a rousing effect on the rest of the men – unfortunately they were roused to be less-inclined to follow a king without a kingdom. They were bolstered in September when an Italian force arrived. In October the sultan made them an extraordinary offer – Jerusalem would be turned over to the crusaders – not the city of Jerusalem, mind you, but the kingdom of Jerusalem ... AND the splinter of wood called the True Cross which was lost to Muslim forces in the 1187 Battle of Hattin .... AND they would release of all Catholic prisoners in Egyptian and Damascene prisons. All the crusaders had to do was leave Egypt; the sultan would even provide them with food and transportation!<sup>8</sup> To achieve this without shedding any blood was, well, not a *Crusade* and the offer was rejected. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, the strategic port of Damietta, with a population of 70,000 finally fell. Unfortunately less than 3,000 inhabitants were alive with 67,000 laying around in varying stages of decay. It took four months to make the city habitable again.



Okay, so the crusaders were not one foot closer to Jerusalem but, never mind. King John had to attend to matters elsewhere in the world – anywhere elsewhere – and left the stinking mess of Damietta, only returning after Pope Honorius ordered him to return in July 1221. While he was gone, the same offer was made by the sultan and again, it was rejected. Greedy eyes gazed south towards the riches of Cairo and with gold and jewels clouding their judgment and a knucklehead named Pelagius to lead them; they marched south along the Nile to capture Cairo. The somewhat bemused sultan sat on the opposite bank watching this army that was completely unfamiliar with just how the Nile worked, defeat itself by marching onto a point of land where the Tanis River joined the Nile.

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<sup>8</sup> Oliver of Paderborn, *The Capture of Damietta*, Translated by John J. Gavigan, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948.

While the two rivers blocked forward progress, the sultan's soldiers who had tailed the crusaders blocked any escape back towards Damietta. And then the flooding came and soon the army was up to its knees in mud and muck. A somewhat chastened Pelagius submitted to the rather generous concessions from the sultan. In return for their abandonment of Damietta and evacuation of Egypt, the sultan would provide food and transportation to Damietta. Damietta was lost, the kingdom of Jerusalem was even more distant from being taken as, while this Damietta fiasco was going on the sultan's forces had destroyed the fortifications at Caesarea. True to form, the Fifth Crusade met the same success of the previous three; it failed on every point.

HUGH IX DE LUSIGNAN, *comte de la Marche*, died on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 1219 when the city of Damietta was captured. As a 24<sup>th</sup>-great-grandfather of the author, he brings the total number to 20: four 24<sup>th</sup>, two 25<sup>th</sup>, five 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup>.



## **CHAPTER 9**

**1228 – 1229**



# THE SIXTH CRUSADE

The Sixth Crusade saw little action, none-the-less it was somewhat successful. All hope of regaining the former Kingdom of Jerusalem was abandoned for the more realistic goal of gaining control of the city of Jerusalem. The increasing irrelevance of the Pope to the Crusades came starkly into focus as the Sixth Crusade was led by an excommunicant – the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II. When announced, men flocked to take part. When they learned of the excommunication, they flocked home. Frederick II, accompanied by a token force, entered into negotiations with the Egyptian sultan immediately upon arrival in the Holy Land. They resurrected a proposed agreement that had been negotiated some years earlier with the governor of Damascus and, with modifications, became the *Treaty of Jaffa and Tell Ajul*. The terms released Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Sidon, and Jaffa to the Christians plus a small strip of land connecting Jerusalem to the coast. However, the ‘release’ of Jerusalem was tempered by a provision for Muslim control of three areas in the city: the Temple Mount and surrounding neighborhoods, the al-Aqsa Mosque, and the Dome of the Rock. The Jews were prohibited from living in Jerusalem and all fortifications east of the Jordan River stayed in Ayyubid hands and all land formerly in the Kingdom of Jerusalem that was not one of the five cities granted to the Christians remained Muslim.



# **CHAPTER 10**

**1229 – 1244**

# CIVIL WAR IN JERUSALEM

## TO THE FALL & DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

1229 – 1243

### CIVIL WAR IN JERUSALEM

Commonly called the *Wars of the Lombards*, this conflict pitted the forces of Imperial Germany (Holy Roman Emperor) against that of the Jerusalemite nobility headed up by the House of Ibelin. Both sides accrued many allies which made sure this was a long and bitter conflict. The wars were just one segment of the tussle between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire. Originally conceived to protect the Papacy, the Empire was its major rival all over Europe by this time. Imperial forces controlled Tyre and Jerusalem (which had just been negotiated away from the Muslims by the Emperor) while the other faction controlled Beireut, Arsuf, and Acre. The military orders were split – Teutonic Knights and Hospitallers on the Imperial side while the banners of the Templars flew on the side of the local aristocracy. Genoa and the Pope supported the locals while Pisa, Antioch, and Tripoli backed the Empire. The first major battle was an Imperial victory at Casal Imbert in May 1232 which was followed up with a major defeat of the same forces at a battle on Cyprus at Agridi the following month. Imperial forces were not just defeated but eliminated from the island kingdom for the foreseeable future. After minor engagements for the next several years, both sides had made little progress. In 1241, the local barons needed to appoint a leader, or *bailie*, for Acre. They settled



on the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Leicester, Simon de Montfort, but he never assumed the position for unstated reasons. De Montfort had fled to Palestine after Henry III threatened him with time in the Tower of London in August 1239 where he had a small roll in the Baron's Crusade. By autumn of 1241, and apparently back in Henry's good graces, he sailed from Acre and turns up fighting against Louis IX of France at Poitou in July 1242. The civil war continued for two more years when the Imperial forces were, in essence, defeated. It was over when their capital at Tyre fell after a long siege in June 1243. If any question remained, it was answered the following month when the citadel in that city was taken. After that, it seems that both sides grew disinterested and just melted back into society.

## **1239 – 1240**

### **BARON'S CRUSADE**

The Kingdom of Jerusalem was restored in 1240 by the poet-king from Navarre, Theobald of Champagne. The gains made by Theobald were founded on those made by the negotiated treaty – which really was a treaty in the correct sense of the word – of Frederick II. He successfully played the fractious Ayyubids against each other and secured the treaty from the Damascenes which restored the Kingdom of Jerusalem for a last but brief moment. This Crusade gained more strategic territory including most of Galilee including Nazareth and Saphet, and the castles of Beaufort, Belvoir, and Tiberius. Saphet had been the site of a crusader fortress from 1168 to 1188, thereafter being garrisoned by troops from Damascus until it was ordered destroyed in 1227. The Templars wasted no time and constructed one of their strongest fortifications there in 1240. Muslim access to the city of Jerusalem was greatly restricted and those areas deemed off-limits to Catholics had their access restored, most notably the Temple Mount with the Holy Sepulcher becoming the responsibility of Catholics to oversee, protect, and guarantee access to anyone who visited.

Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the brother of Henry III, King of England, took the Cross and was another of the *Baron's* in this Crusade; he accomplished little.

In 1241 Richard d'Argentein (an ancestor) became Templar Master in England, a post he held until his death in 1246; there's no indication he went on Crusade.

## **1244**

### **THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM**

The gains of Theobald were fleeting. On 15 July 1244 Jerusalem not only fell but, this time, the city was destroyed. The Khwārezmians from what is now northern Syria and Iraq, saw to it that the destruction was quite complete and to thwart anyone from entertaining any ideas about mounting a challenge, they massacred every Christian they could. At La Forbie, near Gaza the opposing forces of the

Ayyubid sultan of Egypt reinforced with mercenaries from Khwarazm and the allied forces of Jerusalem, the three warrior-monk orders – the Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutons – and breakaway factions of the Ayyubids came together at a particularly fierce engagement called the Battle of Hiriya. Fought over two days, the battle reached its climax on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1244 with allied losses reaching 70% of their force of 11,000. By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> just 3,500 remained – 5,000 were dead, 1,500 wounded or missing, and 1,000 were prisoners. At the end of that day, the three warrior-monk orders were obliterated – 33 Templars, 27 Hospitallers, and just 3 Teutonic knights were alive. Not only was it a defeat on the field and a defeat for Outremer; it was a defeat that marked the end of centuries of ignorance bred by unfailing adherence to and belief in the views spouted by a few men who claimed to be appointed by God.

Crusading no longer offered the incentives it once did – no fortunes were being made in the East, or in the West, for that matter from this seemingly unending venture. What happened to the heady days of 1100? Everything had pretty much gone downhill ever since – even the gains made between 1228 and 1240 were ephemeral. Interaction with the disparate cultures that called the Levant home also had a great many questioning the wisdom of a Pope who stated that Muslims were not humans and therefore it was not a sin to murder one, or a hundred. If that were true then what kind of god was that to follow? If it were not true, it made the Pope a liar. What was happening to everyone who got suckered in by his lies? Were all their ancestors who they believed were doing the work for the greater glory of God, in reality just mass murderers, condemned to an eternity in hell? With all of this brought on by an unquestioning and uncritical congregation that believed anything promulgated by Popes, who was the greater evil-doer – those that murdered or those that convinced them they weren't murdering? Who was going to hell – the people or the Popes? Were papal bulls no more than papal bull?

What is perhaps the greatest benefit to the world of the crusades, in retrospect, was the beginning of the end of the times where people would blindly follow the exhortations of someone parading around in a funny hat and dress who claimed to be the only conduit to the creator. They began to exercise their minds and question whether or not such a thing was possible, let alone desirable. Once awakened, the faculty of critical thinking could not be stopped. The seeds of the Enlightenment had been sown by the very people that would do anything to keep the faithful and ignorant in their susceptible and pliable state.



# **CHAPTER 11**

**1248 – 1254**



# THE SEVENTH CRUSADE

Pope Gregory IX made sure to call for another Crusade before the expiration of the truce called for in the *Treaty of Jaffa and Tell Ajul* that closed the Sixth Crusade. He did so in the papal bull issued on 17 November 1234 called *Rachel suum videns*. This was followed up by the next Pope, Innocent IV, when he issued the papal bull *Terra Sancti Christi* on 23 January 1245. The Seventh Crusade was launched by the French king Louis IX who decided to recapture the Holy Land by conquering Egypt first. Just like the leaders of the Fifth Crusade, Louis IX succeeded in capturing Damietta but unlike that Crusade, the Egyptian forces had abandoned the city to the French king in June 1249. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November the French followed in the footsteps of the Fifth Crusade – quite literally. They marched down the east bank of the Nile to the exact same spot where the Tanis River joins the Damietta branch of the Nile, forming a point of land where the rivers cannot be easily crossed. Instead of being greeted by a desolate landscape covered with a field of tents on the opposite bank, there now stood the mighty fortress of *al-Mansurah*, built in the twenty-five years since a bloodied and bruised Pelagius was humiliated by his ignorance of the fact that the Nile floods each year. On that point of land Louis and the Crusaders celebrated Christmas, Epiphany, and Lent before an answer came in the form of a ford...



No! ... Not a **Ford!**

A river ford!

Successfully crossing the river, which was more attributable to the sultan allowing them to cross than any great physical feat, the king's rash and impudent

brother, Robert of Artois, dashed headlong into infamy as the leader who almost single-handedly destroyed an entire French army. They were cut to shreds while Louis managed to steal away but while attempting a retreat, he was captured at the battle of Fariskur on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. The three surviving Templar Knights managed to sail a group of fleeing soldiers to within a dozen miles of Damietta before they were overtaken. The loss in men was total but more losses were yet to be felt. The French treasury was bankrupt after paying 50% of the ransom – 400,000 *bezants* (€153,000, \$165,000 USD) – to secure his release of their king. This seems humiliation enough, but no. The king's dysentery returned with such a vengeance he had to cut the seat out of all his pants. Once released, the king, with his two surviving brothers Carlo d'Angio and Alphonse of Poitiers, sailed from Damietta on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1250 which remains to this day a celebrated date called National Day, in that area of Egypt.

Undeterred, the king sailed to Acre where he remained for two years planning the next stage of his crusade. His plans were interrupted in March 1253 when he received news of the death of his 64 year-old mother, Blanche of Castile six months earlier, in November 1252. She had ruled France and oversaw the flow of money and men to Egypt as regent for six years. His return to France in 1254 marks the end of the Seventh Crusade though there had been no fighting since their dismal performance in Egypt which hardly qualifies as *fighting*.

The chaps-wearing LOUIS IX CAPET is numbered among the author's less illustrious ancestors, being a 23<sup>rd</sup> great-grandfather. He is the first addition to the list since 1219, bringing the total to 21: one 23<sup>rd</sup>, four 24<sup>th</sup>, two 25<sup>th</sup>, five 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, and one 30<sup>th</sup>.



## **CHAPTER 12**

**1265 – 1268**

# THE ATTACK

*ON THE*

## KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

*TO THE*

### FALL OF ANTIOCH

Once Muslim rule in Syria and Egypt had been consolidated under the sultan Baibars, the states that existed at the wish, will, and expense of the Western European powers did so on borrowed time. Locally-generated income dropped in proportion to the territory they controlled. The major costs had always been the building, manning, and supply of the huge fortifications in and around the main cities. With a lot of land from which taxes could be had, these were more than self-sustaining – they were profitable. Once the rural areas were lost, the income generated by the cities was insufficient for the task at hand and those in the west that had a financial stake to protect did so in the hope of even greater gains in the future when the pendulum swung back in their favor. In January 1260 the forces of Armenian Cilicia, Antioch, and Tripoli made an unusual alliance with the Mongols who had ravaged the Seljuk Turks before turning their covetous eyes upon Mamluk Egypt. The allied forces besieged Aleppo which fell after six days and all Muslim and Jewish men were slaughtered while the women and children were sent to the slave markets. This rather odd pairing came just twenty years after the first Mongol invasion of Europe which saw tens of thousands of Christians slaughtered. The Christian princes were rewarded with vast sums of money, essentially being mercenary forces hired by the Mongols. They made more money when the Egyptian army marched to meet the Mongol foe. Upon reaching the southern border of Outremer, they were allowed to pass, for a fee, and to purchase supplies at inflated costs. At the same time, the Christians made more money by guiding the Mongols through unfamiliar lands

and providing the vanguard of the Mongol onslaught. This brief period of ascendancy lasted less than a year. Unbeknownst to the west, Baibars had snapped off that pendulum when he defeated the Mongolian forces that were invading Syria at 'Ayn Jalut in Galilee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September 1260. The immediate ramifications for the crusaders were dismal; their forces in the vanguard were annihilated while the long-term ramifications were still felt centuries later. It was only in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century that the delicious beef recipe finally made it from the Mongolian plateau to the west coast of the United States.



Regrouped, refreshed, resupplied and reinvigorated it was time for reconquest. The time to take back the lands that had been torn from the fold at the start of the 12<sup>th</sup> century had come. The late 11<sup>th</sup> century gains of Edessa and Jerusalem had been in Muslim hands for decades, save for the strip of coastal cities. But now that Syria and Egypt were no longer at loggerheads and the roads from the east were open to trade once the Mongolian threat was eliminated, it was high time to reclaim the port cities that commanded an inordinate percentage of the wealth generated within the vast lands under, or soon to be under, their control.

## 1265

### ATTACK ON THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

In February Baibars marched his Egyptian forces and sailed his Mamluk forces to the port of Caesaria. Located about midway between the northern and southern extremes of the restored Kingdom of Jerusalem, its capture would effectively split the kingdom in two. The undermanned and beleaguered city was not expecting an attack nor was prepared for one. They managed to hold out for a couple weeks against the siege machines but as the sun rose on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, Baibars watched as anything that was seaworthy, and some things that weren't, piled high with valuables and leftover spaces yielded to the highest paying refugees, streamed out of the port hoping to reach the safety of Acre in short order. The Mamluks were ordered to raze the walls and any structure that could be used as a fortification to thwart any attempt to repopulate the city by invaders. The northern port city of Haifa, aware of the destruction and cognizant of the futility of any attempt to resist, sailed away before the attackers had even arrived. All defensive structures were, likewise, razed and the once predominantly Jewish settlement was available for reclamation by the exiled Jews and their descendants. Next in line was Arsuf located south of Caesaria; the mighty castle withstood several weeks of intense bombardment, in no small part due to the arrival of a relieving force from Cyprus under the command of their

leader Hugh III. This delayed but did not stop what seemed inevitable; by the end of April, it was over. The town fell on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April and suffered the same fate as the other two – nothing that could be used as a defensive position was left standing.

## **1266**

### **ATTACK ON THE COUNTY OF TRIPOLI**

The campaigning season opened with a series of attacks on Acre, Tyre, and Sidon before sweeping through Tripoli where the areas surrounding the major port city of Tortosa were laid waste and several smaller castles were leveled. The next target strayed from the pattern – it was not a coastal port city – it was the major fortress of Saphed. Situated about halfway between the cities of Damascus and Acre, it controlled access in and out of both cities. Built in 1240 by the Templars, it was one of their strongest fortifications ever built in the Levant.

## **24 JULY 1266**

### **FALL OF SAPHED**

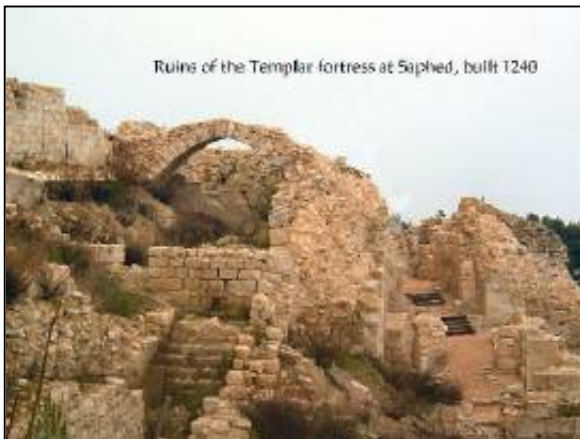
After suffering a severe bombardment that lasted several weeks, the sultan negotiated the surrender with a Templar sergeant. Relaying the terms to those inside, as expected, the Sultan appeared before the walls on July 23<sup>rd</sup> and offered safe passage to all who wanted to leave. Worn down by hunger and bombardment, the defenders accepted the terms. The defenders and citizens evacuated the walled city on the 24<sup>th</sup> of July only to be informed a bit later as they stood corralled on a hillock about a half-mile from town that was used by the Templars for executions that the person who appeared before the walls the day before was, in fact, not Baibars at all, but an imposter. Therefore an agreement had not been reached and hostilities had not stopped; in addition some of the Templars were carrying weapons which had been strictly forbidden under the agreed terms. The Mamluks proceeded to massacre every person whether knight or civilian.

Historians have had a proverbial field day with this story however unbelievable it may be. As to the alleged imposter – historians point to the fact that Baibars was easily identifiable by the flecks of white that peppered his otherwise brilliant blue eyes as evidence of the gullibility of the Templars. Baibars, or the imposter if we are to believe that one ever existed, stood on the ground and talked with the Templars on the walls. Any one who thinks the color of ones eyes could be determined at such a distance, let alone the fact that the identifying characteristic of those eyes were the white flecks, is merely displaying the own ignorance of the capabilities of the human sense of sight. What is completely ignored is the fact that it did not matter one wit whether an imposter was involved at all – the guarantee was made by the sultan or his agent standing at the walls. End of

discussion. It was a guarantee of safe passage granted at the order of the sultan, whether he or someone else shouted the terms out to the Templars or not, *ergo*, it was valid and Baibars was bound by the terms to uphold it. That he had no apparent intention to ever grant safe passage and used the ruse to gain a victory is the way in which the story is portrayed in the west to this day; *e.g.* see Jones' *The Templars*, p. 271. It's the approach of an apologist wanting to make the fall of Saphed come through to us as being caused by the deceit of the ungodly Muslim rather than being another in a long line of military defeats, or worse, brought on by an unethical, amoral Templar knight.

Some historians have portrayed the Templar sergeant as a traitor since he was the one who negotiated the terms of the surrender agreement and conveyed those terms to his fellow Templars inside. The facts are not indicative of any treacherous act in the least; he negotiated the terms and relayed them to those inside. Whether he knew it was ruse, if indeed it was, or not is not a knowable quantity. The claim that his life was spared and he converted to the Islamic faith is (1) hearsay, (2) undocumented and, (3) not relevant unless it can be proven that he made the alleged conversion or made a vow to convert during the negotiations – which is not a provable quantity. He may have converted because he (gosh, golly, gee whiz) *wanted* to convert. The summary disregard of the possibility of such a reason to convert merely highlights the ignorance of those that continue to promulgate such stories without the required critical scrutiny.

More than likely, it is probable that the negotiations for the safe passage included the standard *no weapons allowed* condition. Violating this stipulation was well-known at the time to have the result it did. The belief that if one person carried a weapon, others carried weapons was founded on painful, previous experiences. The probable cause of the slaughter was that someone, perhaps a Templar knight, made a conscious decision to carry a weapon and that cost the lives of hundreds of people. Authors that make this assertion risk stinging rebukes and threats of violence centuries later.



Unlike the fate of most other fortifications, Saphed was strengthened and became the center of the forces that safeguarded not only the road to Damascus but also the while coastal region of the former kingdom. The ruins of the 1240 Crusader fort continue to draw tourists to this day.



## **1267 – 1269**

## **RHENISH CRUSADE**

In response to the loss of Arsuf and Caesarea, Pope Clement IV issued the bull *Expansis in cruce* authorizing a formal crusade in August 1265. The Rhenish crusaders left Basel during Lent (2 March–10 April) and traveled overland to Genoa. It is believed they continued by gaining passage on a Genoese war fleet of 25 ships that left Genoa in late June and arrived in Acre on 16 August 1267. The army did not plan to be the lone force and understood that others would soon be joining them. They initially avoided any military confrontations with Baibars' forces while waiting. Nearly a year passed with no sightings of the sails of the immense Crusader fleet cresting the horizon as they neared Acre. If they did participate, it was not one to be remembered fondly. The campaigning season of 1268 was notable for the dearth of targets – going on the offensive to reclaim even one of the lost cities was beyond the strength of the local military even when combined with the waning strength of the military orders and the addition of a contingent from the Rhineland offered little in the way of overall strength despite the boost to what little remained of the optimism for the whole project to expand the western European powers to the Levant.

## **17 MARCH 1268**

## **FALL OF JAFFA**

Baibars' first target was Jaffa, always an important link in the coastal settlements of the Kingdoms of Jerusalem and Acre. Its importance only grew after those coastal towns had been retaken by the Muslim forces from Egypt. Arriving before the walls of the city in March and with barely enough time to set up his lines and bring up the siege equipment, the city *fell* (if it could be called that) in just 12 hours. It surrendered after a token show of force.

## **18 MAY 1268**

## **FALL OF ANTIOCH**

The Principality of Antioch is another clear demonstration of the reasons behind these military adventures in the East. Money flowed into the coffers of the rulers and the desire for more required an ever-increasing amount of taxable land. This land usually came at the expense of the neighbors. The majority of those neighbors were Catholic or Christian states: the Catholic Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia lay to the west, the County of Edessa was to the east, at least until it fell in 1144, while the County of Tripoli lay to the south. When Edessa fell in 1144, Antioch became the primary target of Syrian reconquest and it lost between 30 and 50% of its territory in the ensuing two decades. For the rest of its existence, Antioch was a vassal state of the Eastern Roman Empire, the Kingdom of

Jerusalem, or Armenian Cilicia. By 1254 it was a *de facto* tributary to the Mongul Empire! It had ceased to play any military role in the Crusades after the Battle of Harenc in 1164. Antioch fell to Islamic forces in 1268 after eight years of attempts made by Sultan Baibars of Egypt. The defense of Antioch was a failure and the city fell to Baibars on 18 May 1268. The final battles for Antioch may have where the Rhenish Crusaders saw their only military action but even that limited role is not certain. Most of the Upper Rhenish crusaders returned home in the period 1269–1270.



## **CHAPTER 13**

**1270**

# THE EIGHTH CRUSADE

Pope Clement IV's bull, *Expansis in cruce* of August 1265, is seen as the Papal call for both the Rhenish and the Eighth Crusades. Undeterred, Louis IX decided to have another go and settled on Tunis as an appropriate target. Tunis had paid tribute to the rulers of Sicily until recently. The king's brother Carlo had become the King of Sicily since their crusading days twenty years earlier. Louis sailed from Aigues-Mortes while the allied fleet of Navarre sailed from Marseille, making landfall on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July near Carthage where they built their camp and waited for Carlo's Sicilian fleet. The siege of Tunis was started but was hampered when the crusader camp was hit with two epidemics before the end of July: dysentery and typhoid fever. Louis's 20-year-old son Jean Tristan died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August. Louis's life-long acquaintance with dysentery ended with his death on 25 August 1270. Carlo arrived that same day, or the day before, or after, depending on the source. He continued with the siege and scored two victories in battle which forced the Tunisian caliph, ABU ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD AL-MUSTANSIR, to sue for peace. The Treaty of Tunis had Tunis assuming the costs of Sicily, Navarre, and France. Free trade with certain Catholic states was guaranteed.

While LOUIS IX CAPET was included in the previous count, ABU ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD AL-MUSTANSIR was not; he brings the total to 22. The author has not yet determined the number of his generation. Undoubtedly there are many ancestors of the author in the forces opposing the Crusaders yet to be determined.



## **CHAPTER 14**

**1271 – 1272**

# THE

## NINTH CRUSADE

The last in the series of military expeditions that sought to recapture the Holy Land from the Muslims was launched by Prince Edward of England who missed out on the Eighth Crusade. His fleet dropped anchor in Tunis on the 7<sup>th</sup> of November 1270 and sailed with the French crusaders when they left on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The combined fleets were heavily damaged in a storm off Trapani with repairs being made after anchoring in Palermo. Edward decided to launch his own expedition to the Levant. The English fleet, now fully repaired and restocked, left Sicilian waters in April 1271, landed in Acre and tried to win support for his cause but lack of interest and news from England about his father's illness prompted him to return home. With Prince Edward's departure, the attempts of the Christian Europe to capture the Holy Land finally came to an end.

NICHOLAS DE SEAGRAVE, 1<sup>st</sup> *Baron Seagrave*, left England intent on being part of Prince Louis's 8<sup>th</sup> Crusade against Tunis but ended up heading to Palestine with the English forces on the non-combatant 9<sup>th</sup> Crusade. He is a 23<sup>rd</sup> great-grandfather of the author.



The total known ancestors of the author to participate in the Crusades numbers 24: two 23<sup>rd</sup>, four 24<sup>th</sup>, two 25<sup>th</sup>, five 26<sup>th</sup>, five 27<sup>th</sup>, one 28<sup>th</sup>, two 29<sup>th</sup>, one 30<sup>th</sup>, and one to be determined. They are named on the next page.

ANCESTORS WHO DIED ON OR BECAUSE OF CRUSADE

LOUIS IX CAPET, *King of France*

HUGH IV DE LUSIGNAN, *Comte de la Marche*

HUGH IX DE LUSIGNAN, *Comte de la Marche*

BALDWIN I DE FLANDERS, *1<sup>st</sup> Latin Emperor*

RAOUL I DE COUCY, *Seigneur de Coucy & Marle*

HENRI I, *Comte de Champagne*

ROGER (3) DE MOWBRAY

HUGH VIII DE LUSIGNAN, *Seigneur de Taillebourg & Fontenay*

HUGH LE BIGOD, *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Norfolk*

GILBERT DE LACY, *3<sup>rd</sup> Baron Lacy of Ludlow and Preceptor, Tripolitan Templars*

ANCESTORS WHO SURVIVED GOING ON CRUSADE

NICHOLAS DE SEAGRAVE, *1<sup>st</sup> Baron Seagrave*

ABU ABDULLAH MUHAMMAD AL-MUSTANSIR, *Emir of Tunis*

HENRI DE REGINAR, *Duke of Brabant*

WILLIAM MARSHALL, *1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Pembroke, aka EARL MARSHALL*

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, *Duchess of Aquitaine, Queen of England*

HUGH II DE GOURNAY

HENRI I DE CHAMPAGNE, *Comte de Champagne*

THOMAS DE MARLE, *Seigneur de Coucy & Marle*

GERARD DE GOURNAY, *Seigneur de Gournay-en-Bray*

EDITHA DE WARENNE, *Countess of Surrey*

AUBREY (1) DE VERE, *Great High Chamberlain of England*

ENGUERRAND I DE BOVES, *Seigneur de Coucy*

SIMON DE ST LIZ, *2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Huntingdon & Northampton*

ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE and EDITHA DE WARENNE didn't simply accompany their husbands; they took the Cross as did all Crusaders and are credited as such, on par with every other Crusader.



# **CHAPTER 15**

**1274 – 1453**

# PAPAL CALLS FOR CRUSADE

## TO THE

# FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

After the Ninth Crusade it became a matter of survival rather than expansion. The three Crusader states still remained: Antioch, Tripoli, and Jerusalem. The most important post-Crusades events were:

- 1274 Pope Gregory X calls for a Crusade
- 1276 the court of the King of Jerusalem moved to the island of Cyprus;
- 1284 kingdom gained ten years of peace with the signing of a truce;
- 1289 Tripoli falls
- 1291 Acre & Tortosa fall and Pope Nicholas IV calls for a Crusade;
- 1299 Pope Boniface XII issues *De Sepulturis*
- 1302 Isle of Rhodus falls, last Crusader holding in Outremer
- 1305 Pope Clement V calls for a Crusade;
- 1365 Alexandria captured and abandoned
- 1426 Cyprus falls

The lack of response to the Pope's calls for Crusades was due, in large part, to the misuse of such calls by their predecessors. Some had used them to gather armies to attack other Europeans, mainly the forces of the Holy Roman (German) Emperor. They were also less than enthusiastic to invest in a venture that had historically proven to be a money pit and a drain on the armed forces.

Acre was taken after a particularly long and bloody siege on 18 May 1291 with over 10,000 soldiers killed or captured along with 100,000 civilians. In July Sidon, Beirut, and Tyre were abandoned to Muslim forces and in August the last two Templar castles, Tortosa and Château Pèlerin, fell.

*De Sepulturis* was issued by Pope Boniface VIII on 27 September 1299. This document forbade the boiling of bodies, which had become popular amongst the Crusader elite for it was the easiest way to transport an individuals' remains back to Europe from the Crusades.<sup>9</sup>

The tiny Isle of Ru'ad, just off the coast at Tortusa, was recaptured by the Knights Templar in 1300 but their grip on it, under their marshal Barthélemy de Quincy, lasted just two years.

In 1365 Peter I, King of Cyprus sacked and occupied the Egyptian city of Alexandria. Once completed though there was nothing more he could do without allies so he abandoned the town and sailed back to Cyprus.

Cyprus, the last of the Catholic-held land in the East, became a vassal state to the Ottomans in 1426.

1453 Constantinople falls to the Ottoman Turks

The last papal bull the author could find that called for a Crusade against Muslims was issued on 1 June 1500. In *Quamvis ad amplianda*, Pope Alexander VI called for military action against the Ottoman Empire.

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<sup>9</sup> Krishan M. Thadani, "The Myth of a Catholic Religious Objection to Autopsy The Misinterpretation of De sepulturis during the Renaissance," *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly* 12.1 (Spring 2012): 37–42.



## **CHAPTER 16**

### **FINAL THOUGHTS**

Dominating the East meant the conquering both the Islamic and the Eastern Roman Empires. While the Crusades failed to do either, in the long-term, it was the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire, coupled with the strengthening of the Islamic Empire, both processes being accelerated by the Crusades that brought the Muslim foe into central Europe a century after the Crusades ended. Islam had been in Western Europe since 711 but as their presence grew in central Europe it shrank in Western Europe with the last Muslim state, al-Andaluz, being conquered in 1492.

The Crusader States are portrayed as a period of success in which the Christians held sway over Outremer; analysis of the data indicates otherwise. The oft-stated 'two centuries' of existence is actually the 174 years from 1098 to 1272. The four (five if you include Acre as a separate kingdom) states existed as follows:

Edessa	46 years	26%	1098 – 1104: sovereign state for 6 years; 1104 – 1144: client state of Antioch
Jerusalem	92 years	53%	1099 – 1187 1240 – 1244
Antioch	170 years	98%	1102 – 1168: sovereign state for 66 years; 1168 – 1272: area reduced by 50%; 1254 – 1272: vassal state of the Mogul Empire
Tripoli	180 years	103%	1109 – 1289*
Acre	48 years	28%	1192 – 1240

\*The County of Tripoli was the only state existing when the Crusades drew to a close in 1272. It held on for seventeen more years, falling in 1289 making it the longest-lived of the four states, lasting 180 years.

The Crusader States also created the longest lived branches of two of Western Europe leading families – the Norman d'Hautevilles, Dukes of Apulia & Calabria and Kings of Sicily lasted longer as the Princes of Antioch while the Lusignan family, prominent in English and French lands, had their longest-running success as the Counts of Tripoli.

The history of the Crusades looms large in the West and the East but this is a relatively recent phenomena. The telling of this history is radically different in both regions. All one has to do is ask any school student from the United Kingdom or the United States who 'won' the Crusades and you will undoubtedly hear a resounding, and wrong, "We did!" The West did not win the Crusades by any measure you choose. The West had control of Jerusalem for just



over half of the 174 year Crusades. The West did not destroy Islam; in fact, it was one of the factors that made it strong enough to take almost all of Central Europe from the Western powers.

The continued teaching of this fake history is perhaps best exemplified by the following exchange that occurred during the Great War. The Frenchman Stéphen Pichon was negotiating with Faisal al-Hashemi (later Faisal I of Iraq) over the future of France's role in Syria. Pichon thought he could bully Faisal by using the example of the Crusades. He hoped bludgeon Faisal's demand for independence, which had been guaranteed by the United Kingdom, into oblivion. Pichon hinted that France may well use their military might to achieve domination as they had during the Crusades. Faisal proved that Pichon was an idiot with one insightful and belittling, remark:

*"But, pardon me, which of us won the crusades?"*<sup>10</sup>

The history of the history of the Crusades in Islamic sources is also revealing. The Arab language was the most common one used in Islamic writings and the language did not even have a word for *Crusade* in their language until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century – that's the import the crusades had on the Islamic world. This unbalanced perception is not the sole purview of Islam though. The so-called *Prestige campaigns* are portrayed in Islamic and Abbasid histories as a major triumph of the early 9<sup>th</sup> century in which the dominant Abbasid kept the subservient Romans in check. That moniker should be a clue to their real import – they weren't campaigns and there weren't prestigious but use of a catchy moniker always sells to the uneducated, then and now – perhaps they were the ones to come up with the style that continues to capture weak minds today – *Making Islam Great*. Writers of history who are immersed in their own society often take very little, if any, notice of the writings originating outside of their society or their language; and when they do, the parties involved in any given situation are often misidentified. The most significant and long-lasting effect of Abbasid rule was the polarization of the Arab and Persian factions of Islam, which laid the foundation for the Sunni – Shia rivalry that continues to cost thousands of lives every year to the present.

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<sup>10</sup> Paul F. Crawford, "Four myths about the Crusades," The Intercollegiate Review, Spring 2011.  
<https://isi.org/intercollegiate-review/four-myths-about-the-crusades/>

As Paul Crawford writes:

*Up until quite recently, Muslims remembered the crusades as an instance in which they had beaten back a puny western Christian attack. This was generally representative of the Muslim attitude toward the crusades before about World War I—that is, when Muslims bothered to remember them at all, which was not often. Most of the Arabic-language historical writing on the crusades before the mid-nineteenth century was produced by Arab Christians, not Muslims, and most of that was positive. There was no Arabic word for “crusades” until that period, either, and even then the coiners of the term were, again, Arab Christians. It had not seemed important to Muslims to distinguish the crusades from other conflicts between Christianity and Islam.*

*Nor had there been an immediate reaction to the crusades among Muslims. As Carole Hillenbrand has noted, “The Muslim response to the coming of the Crusades was initially one of apathy, compromise and preoccupation with internal problems.” By the 1130s, a Muslim counter-crusade did begin, under the leadership of the ferocious Zengi of Mosul. But it had taken some decades for the Muslim world to become concerned about Jerusalem, which is usually held in higher esteem by Muslims when it is not held by them than when it is. Action against the crusaders was often subsequently pursued as a means of uniting the Muslim world behind various aspiring conquerors, until 1291, when the Christians were expelled from the Syrian mainland. And—surprisingly to Westerners—it was not Saladin who was revered by Muslims as the great anti-Christian leader. That place of honor usually went to the more bloodthirsty, and more successful, Zengi and Baibars, or to the more public-spirited Nur al-Din.*

One never knows where the most eloquent of statements, or the most cutting of statements may come from. Perhaps the most enlightened and informed statement on the Crusades comes from Monty Python. The *Knights of Ni* are required to memorize the following:

*If you believe the Knights of Ni were required to memorize anything other than the lines for their next shot, well, what can I say?*

But it does come from the same origin as Monty Python ...

Terence Jones (1941 – 2020), whose credits include being one of the creators of *Monty Python's Flying Circus* which he also acted in; he was a writer, director, and actor of such Python favorites as *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *Monty Python's Life of Brian*, and *Monty Python's Meaning of Life*. Terence had another lesser known role as the writer and host of several BBC history documentaries such as *Terry Jones' Barbarians* (2006), *Terry Jones' Medieval Lives* (2004), and *Crusades* (1995)<sup>11</sup> from which the following quote is taken:

*It took two hundred years for the Crusaders to create this Islamic fanaticism, but they had done it.*

*It was an imitation of their own intolerance.*

*I suppose one of the great gifts of religion is that it provides us with certainty in this uncertain, temporary situation in which we find ourselves called life.*

*The only snag is that religion seems to make some people so certain that they're prepared to do terrible things to other people. This is certainly the story of the Crusades.*

*Probably most Crusaders set out with the intention of doing good and yet, they ended up perpetrating one of the great crimes against humanity.*

*What's more is the entire enterprise was a total failure. The net result of all their efforts was the exact opposite of what they had hoped to achieve.*

*Islam, far from being destroyed, learned to imitate Europe's rage; Constantinople, far from being saved, never recovered. ...*

*... and 900 years after it all began, the world still lives in the long shadow of the Crusades.*



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<sup>11</sup> Terence Jones, *Crusades Part 4: Destruction* (BBC/A&E, 1995)

Salam

Shalom

Peace

